THE BIRTH-DAY PRESENT,

SIMPLE SUSAN,

BEING THE SECOND VOLUME

OF

THE PARENT'S ASSISTANT,

OR

STORIES FOR CHILDREN.

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THE BIRTH-DAY PRESENT.

"MAMMA," ſaid Roſamond, after a long ſilence, "do you know, what I have been thinking of all this time?"

"No, my dear.—What?"

"Why, mamma, about my couſin Bell's birth-day; do you know what day it is?"

"No, I don't remember."

"Dear mother! don't you remember it's the 22d of December; and her birth-day is the day after to-morrow?—Don't you recollect now? But you never remember about birth-days, mamma: that was juſt what I was thinking of, that you never remember my ſiſter Laura's birth-day, or—or—or *mine*, mamma?"

"What do you mean, my dear? I remember your birth-day perfectly well."

"Indeed! but you never *keep* it though."

"What do you mean by keeping your birth-day?"

"Oh, mamma, you know very well —as Bell's birth-day is kept.—In the firſt place there is a great dinner."

"And can Bell eat more upon her birth-day than upon any other day?"

"No; nor I ſhould not mind about the dinner, except the mince pies. But Bell has a great many nice things; I don't mean nice eatable things, but nice new playthings given to her always on her birth-day; and every body drinks her health, and ſhe's ſo happy."

"But ſtay, Roſamond, how you jumble things together! Is it every

body's drinking her health, that makes her ſo happy; or the new playthings, or the nice mince pies? I can eaſily believe, that ſhe is happy whilſt ſhe is eating a mince pie, or whilſt ſhe is playing; but how does every body's drinking her health at dinner make her happy?"

Roſamond pauſed, and then ſaid ſhe did not know. "But," added ſhe, "the *nice new* play things mother!"

"But why the nice new playthings? Do you like them only becauſe they are *new?*"

"Not *only*—*I* do not like playthings *only* becauſe they are new, but Bell *does* I believe—for that puts me in mind—Do you know, mother, ſhe had a great drawer full of *old* playthings that ſhe never uſed, and ſhe ſaid that they were good for nothing, becauſe they were *old*; but

I thought many of them were good for a great deal more than the new ones.—Now you ſhall be judge, mamma; I'll tell you all that was in the drawer."

"Nay, Roſamond, thank you, not juſt now; I have not time to liſten to you."

"Well then, mamma, the day after to-morrow I can ſhew you the drawer: I want you to be judge very much, becauſe I am ſure I was in the right.—And, mother," added Roſamond, ſtopping her as ſhe was going out of the room, "will you—not now, but when you've time—will you tell me why you never keep my birth-day—why you never make any difference between that day and any other day?"

"And will you, Roſamond—not now, but when you have time to think about it—tell me why I ſhould make any dif-

ference between your birth-day and any other day?"

Roſamond thought—but ſhe could not find out any reaſon: beſides, ſhe ſuddenly recollected, that ſhe had not time to think any longer, for there was a certain work baſket to be finiſhed, which ſhe was making for her couſin Bell, as a preſent upon her birth-day. The work was at a ſtand for want of ſome filigree paper, and as her mother was going out ſhe aſked her to take her with her, that ſhe might buy ſome. Her ſiſter Laura went with them.

"Siſter," ſaid Roſamond, as they were walking along, "what have you done with your half-guinea?"

"I have it in my pocket."

"Dear! you will keep it for ever in your pocket: you know my god-mother, when ſhe gave it to you, ſaid you would

keep it longer than I ſhould keep mine; and I know what ſhe thought by her look at the time. I heard her ſay ſomething to my mother."

"Yes," ſaid Laura, ſmiling, "ſhe whiſpered ſo loud, that I could not help hearing her too: ſhe ſaid I was a little miſer."

"But did not you hear her ſay that I was very *generous?* and ſhe'll ſee that ſhe was not miſtaken. I hope ſhe'll be by when I give my baſket to Bell—won't it be beautiful?—there is to be a wreath of myrtle, you know, round the handle, and a froſt ground, and then the medallions——"

"Stay," interrupted her ſiſter; for Roſamond, anticipating the glories of her work-baſket, talked and walked ſo faſt, that ſhe had paſſed, without perceiving it, the ſhop where the filigree

paper was to be bought. They turned back. Now it happened, that the ſhop was the corner houſe of a ſtreet, and one of the windows looked out into a narrow lane: a coach full of ladies ſtopped at the door juſt before they went in, ſo that no one had time immediately to think of Roſamond and her filigree paper, and ſhe went to the window, where ſhe ſaw, that her ſiſter Laura was looking earneſtly at ſomething that was paſſing in the lane.

Oppoſite to the window, at the door of a poor looking houſe, there was ſitting a little girl weaving lace. Her bobbins moved as quick as lightning, and ſhe never once looked up from her work.

"Is not ſhe very induſtrious?" ſaid Laura; "and very honeſt too," added ſhe in a minute afterwards; for juſt then,

a baker with a baſket of rolls on his head paſſed, and by accident one of the rolls fell cloſe to the little girl: ſhe took it up eagerly, looked at it as if ſhe was very hungry, then put aſide her work, and ran after the baker to return it to him.

Whilſt ſhe was gone, a footman in a livery laced with ſilver, who belonged to the coach that ſtood at the ſhop door, as he was lounging with one of his companions, chanced to ſpy the weaving pillow, which ſhe had left upon a ſtone before the door. To divert himſelf (for idle people do miſchief often to divert themſelves) he took up the pillow, and entangled all the bobbins. The little girl came back out of breath to her work; but what was her ſurprize and ſorrow to find it ſpoiled: ſhe twiſted and untwiſted, placed and replaced the

bobbins, while the footman ſtood laughing at her diſtreſs. She got up gently, and was retiring into the houſe, when the ſilver-laced footman ſtopped her, ſaying inſolently—"Sit ſtill, child."

"I muſt go to my mother, ſir," ſaid the child; "beſides, you have ſpoiled all my lace—I can't ſtay."

"Can't you," ſaid the brutal footman, ſnatching her weaving pillow again, "I'll teach you to complain of me." And he broke off, one after another, all the bobbins, put them into his pocket, rolled her weaving pillow down the dirty lane, then jumped up behind his miſtreſs's coach, and was out of ſight in an inſtant.

"Poor girl!" exclaimed Roſamond, no longer able to reſtrain her indignation at this injuſtice: "Poor little girl!"

At this inſtant her mother ſaid to Roſamond—"Come now, my dear, if you want this filigree paper, buy it."

"Yes, madam," ſaid Roſamond; and the idea of what her godmother and her couſin Bell would think of her generoſity ruſhed again upon her imagination. All her feelings of pity were immediately ſuppreſſed. Satisfied with beſtowing another exclamation upon the "*Poor little girl*," ſhe went to ſpend her half-guinea upon her filigree baſket. In the mean time, ſhe that was called the "*little miſer*," beckoned to the poor girl, and opening the window ſaid, pointing to the cuſhion, "Is it quite ſpoiled?"

"Quite! quite ſpoiled! and I can't, nor mother neither, buy another; and I can't do any thing elſe for my bread."—A few, but very few, tears fell as ſhe ſaid this.

"How much would another coſt?" ſaid Laura.

"Oh, a great—*great* deal."

"More than that?" ſaid Laura, holding up her half-guinea.

"Oh, no."

"Then you can buy another with that," ſaid Laura, dropping the half-guinea into her hand, and ſhe ſhut the window before the child could find words to thank her; but not before ſhe ſaw a look of joy and gratitude, which gave Laura more pleaſure probably than all the praiſe, which could have been beſtowed upon her generoſity.

Late on the morning of her couſin's birth-day, Roſamond finiſhed her work-baſket. The carriage was at the door—Laura came running to call her; her father's voice was heard at the ſame inſtant; ſo ſhe was obliged to go down

with her basket but half wrapped up in silver paper, a circumstance at which she was a good deal disconcerted; for the pleasure of surprising Bell would be utterly lost, if one bit of the filigree should peep out before the proper time. As the carriage went on, Rosamond pulled the paper to one side and to the other, and by each of the four corners.

"It will never do, my dear," said her father, who had been watching her operations; "I am afraid you will never make a sheet of paper cover a box, which is twice as large as itself."

"It is not a box, father," said Rosamond, a little peevishly; "it's a basket."

"Let us look at this basket," said he, taking it out of her unwilling hands; for she knew of what frail materials it was made, and she dreaded its com-

ing to pieces under her father's examination.

He took hold of the handle rather roughly, and ſtarting off the coach ſeat, ſhe cried—

"Oh, ſir! father! ſir! you will ſpoil it indeed!" ſaid ſhe with increaſed vehemence, when, after drawing aſide the veil of ſilver paper, ſhe ſaw him graſp the myrtle-wreathed handle.

"Indeed, ſir, you will ſpoil the poor handle."

"But what is the uſe of *the poor handle*," ſaid her father, "if we are not to take hold of it? And pray," continued he, turning the baſket round with his finger and thumb, rather in a diſreſpectful manner—"pray is this the thing you have been about all this week? I have ſeen you all this week dabbling with paſte and rags; I could not con-

ceive what you were about—Is this the thing?"

"Yes, ſir—You think then that I have waſted my time, becauſe the baſket is of no uſe: but then it is for a preſent for my couſin Bell."

"Your couſin Bell will be very much obliged to you for a preſent that is of no uſe; you had better have given her the purple jar." *

"Oh, father! I thought you had forgotten that—it was two years ago; I'm not ſo ſilly now. But Bell will like the baſket I know, though it is of no uſe."

"Then you think Bell is ſillier *now*, than you were two years ago.—Well, perhaps that is true; but how comes it, Roſamond, now that you are ſo wiſe, that you are fond of ſuch a ſilly perſon?"

* See Early Leſſons, publiſhed by J. Johnſon.

"*I*, father?" ſaid Roſamond, heſitating; "I don't think I am *very* fond of her."

"I did not ſay *very* fond."

"Well, but I don't think I am at all fond of her."

"But you have ſpent a whole week in making this thing for her."

"Yes, and all my half-guinea beſides."

"Yet you think her ſilly, and you are not fond of her at all; and you ſay you know this thing will be of no uſe to her."

"But it is her birth-day, ſir; and I am ſure ſhe will *expect* ſomething, and every body elſe will give her ſomething."

"Then your reaſon for giving is becauſe ſhe expects you to give her ſomething. And will you, or can you, or ſhould you always give, merely be-

cauſe others *expect*, or becauſe ſome-body elſe gives?"

"Always!—no, not always."

"Oh, only on birth-days."

Roſamond, laughing, "Now you are making a joke of me, papa, I ſee; but I thought you liked that people ſhould be generous—my godmother ſaid that ſhe did."

"So do I, full as well as your god-mother; but we have not yet quite ſet-tled what it is to be generous."

"Why, is it not generous to make preſents?" ſaid Roſamond.

"That is a queſtion, which it would take up a great deal of time to anſwer. But, for inſtance, to make a preſent of a thing, that you know can be of no uſe, to a perſon you neither love nor eſteem, becauſe it is her birth-day, and becauſe every body gives her ſomething,

and becauſe ſhe expects ſomething, and becauſe your godmother ſays ſhe likes that people ſhould be generous, ſeems to me, my dear Roſamond, to be, ſince I muſt ſay it, rather more like folly than generoſity."

Roſamond looked down upon the baſket, and was ſilent.

"Then I am a fool! am I?" ſaid ſhe, looking up at laſt.

"Becauſe you have made *one* miſtake?—No. If you have ſenſe enough to ſee your own miſtakes, and can afterwards avoid them, you will never be a fool."

Here the carriage ſtopped, and Roſamond recollected, that the baſket was uncovered.

Now we muſt obſerve, that Roſamond's father had not been too ſevere upon Bell, when he called her a ſilly girl.

From her infancy ſhe had been humoured; and at eight years old ſhe had the misfortune to be a ſpoiled child: ſhe was idle, fretful, and ſelfiſh, ſo that nothing could make her happy. On her birth-day ſhe expected, however, to be perfectly happy. Every body in the houſe tried to pleaſe her, and they ſucceeded ſo well, that between breakfaſt and dinner ſhe had only ſix fits of crying. The cauſe of five of theſe fits no one could diſcover; but the laſt, and moſt lamentable, was occaſioned by a diſappointment about a worked muſlin frock, and accordingly at dreſſing-time her maid brought it to her, exclaiming—"See here miſs! what your mamma has ſent you on your birth-day—Here's a frock fit for a queen—if it had but lace round the cuffs."

"And why has not it lace round the cuffs? mamma ſaid it ſhould."

"Yes, but miſtreſs was diſappointed about the lace; it is not come home."

"Not come home, indeed! and did'nt they know it was my birth-day? But then I ſay I won't wear it without the lace—I can't wear it without the lace—and I wo'nt."

The lace, however, could not be had; and Bell at length ſubmitted to let the frock be put on. "Come, Miſs Bell, dry your eyes," ſaid the maid who *educated* her; "dry your eyes, and I'll tell you ſomething, that will pleaſe you."

"What, then?" ſaid the child, pouting and ſobbing.

"Why——but you muſt not tell, that I told you."

"No—but if I am aſked?"

"Why, if you are aſked, you muſt tell the truth to be ſure.—So I'll hold my tongue, miſs."

"Nay, tell me though, and I'll never tell—if I *am* aſked."

"Well, then," ſaid the maid, "your couſin Roſamond is come, and has brought you the moſt *beautifulleſt* thing you ever ſaw in your life; but you are not to know any thing about it till after dinner, becauſe ſhe wants to ſurpriſe you; and miſtreſs has put it into her wardrobe till after dinner."

"Till after dinner!" repeated Bell, impatiently; "I can't wait till then, I muſt ſee it this minute."

The maid refuſed her ſeveral times, till Bell burſt into another fit of crying, and the maid, fearing that her miſtreſs would be angry with *her*, if Bell's eyes

were red at dinner-time, consented to shew her the basket.

"How pretty!—But let me have it in my own hands," said Bell, as the maid held the basket up out of her reach.

"Oh no, you must not touch it; for if you should spoil it, what would become of me?"

"Become of you indeed!" exclaimed the spoiled child, who never considered any thing but her own immediate gratification—"Become of *you*, indeed! what signifies that—I shan't spoil it; and I will have it in my own hands.—If you don't hold it down for me directly, I'll tell that you shewed it to me."

"Then you won't snatch it?"

"No, no, I won't indeed," said Bell; but she had learned from her maid a

total diſregard of truth.—She ſnatched the baſket the moment it was within her reach; a ſtruggle enſued, in which the handle and lid were torn off, and one of the medallions cruſhed inwards, before the little fury returned to her ſenſes. Calmed at this ſight, the next queſtion was, how ſhe ſhould conceal the miſchief, which ſhe had done. After many attempts, the handle and lid were replaced, the baſket was put exactly in the ſame ſpot in which it had ſtood before, and the maid charged the child, "*to look as if nothing was the matter.*"

We hope that both children and parents will here pauſe for a moment to reflect.—The habits of tyranny, meanneſs, and falſehood, which children acquire from living with bad ſervants, are ſcarcely ever conquered

in the whole courſe of their future lives.

After ſhutting up the baſket they left the room, and in the adjoining paſſage they found a poor girl waiting with a ſmall parcel in her hand.

"What's your buſineſs?" ſaid the maid.

"I have brought home the lace, madam, that was beſpoke for the young lady."

"Oh, you have, have you, at laſt?" ſaid Bell; "and pray why did'nt you bring it ſooner?"

The girl was going to anſwer, but the maid interrupted her, ſaying—"Come, come, none of your excuſes; you are a little idle good for nothing thing, to diſappoint Miſs Bell upon her birth-day.—But now you have brought it, let us look at it?" The little girl

gave the lace without reply, and the maid desired her to go about her business, and not to expect to be paid; for that her mistress could not see any body, *because* she was in a room full of company.

"May I call again, madam, this afternoon?" said the child, timidly.

"Lord bless my stars!" replied the maid, "what makes people so poor, I *wonders!* I wish mistress would buy her lace at the warehouse, as I told her, and not of these folks.—Call again! yes, to be sure—I believe you'd call, call, call twenty times for two-pence."

However ungraciously the permission to call again was granted, it was received with gratitude: the little girl departed with a chearful countenance: and Bell teized her maid till she got

her to ſew the long wiſhed for lace upon her cuffs.

Unfortunate Bell!—All dinner-time paſſed, and people were ſo hungry, ſo buſy, or ſo ſtupid, that not an eye obſerved her favourite piece of finery. Till at length ſhe was no longer able to conceal her impatience, and turning to Laura, who ſat next to her, ſhe ſaid—"You have no lace upon your cuffs; look how beautiful mine is!—Is not it? Don't you wiſh your mamma could afford to give you ſome like it?—But you can't get any if ſhe would, for this was made on purpoſe for me on my birth-day, and nobody can get a bit more any where, if they would give the world for it."

"But cannot the perſon who made it," ſaid Laura, "make any more like it?"

"No, no, no!" cried Bell; for ſhe had already learned, either from her maid or her mother, the mean pride, which values things not for being really pretty or uſeful, but for being ſuch as nobody elſe can procure.

"Nobody can get any like it, I ſay," repeated Bell; "Nobody in all London can make it but one perſon, and that perſon will never make a bit for any body but me, I am ſure—mamma won't let her, if I aſk her not."

"Very well," ſaid Laura, coolly, "I do not want any of it; you need not be ſo violent: I aſſure you that I don't want any of it."

"Yes, but you do though," ſaid Bell, more angrily.

"No, indeed," ſaid Laura, ſmiling.

"You do in the bottom of your heart; but you ſay you don't to plague

me, I know," cried Bell, ſwelling with diſappointed vanity.—" It is pretty for all that, and it coſt a great deal of money too, and nobody ſhall have any like it if, they cried their eyes out."

Laura received this ſentence in ſilence —Roſamond ſmiled. And at her ſmile the ill-ſuppreſſed rage of the ſpoiled child burſt forth into the ſeventh and loudeſt fit of crying, which had been heard upon her birth-day.

" What's the matter, my pet?" cried her mother; " Come to me, and tell me what's the matter."

Bell ran roaring to her mother; but no otherwiſe explained the cauſe of her ſorrow than by tearing the fine lace, with frantic geſtures, from her cuffs, and throwing the fragments into her mother's lap.

"Oh! the lace, child!—are you mad?" ſaid her mother, catching hold of both her hands. "Your beautiful lace, my dear love—do you know how much it coſt?"

"I don't care how much it coſt—it is not beautiful, and I'll have none of it," replied Bell, ſobbing—"for it is not beautiful."

"But it is beautiful," retorted her mother; "I choſe the pattern myſelf. Who has put it into your head, child, to diſlike it?—Was it Nancy?"

"No, not Nancy, but *them*, mamma," ſaid Bell, pointing to Laura and Roſamond.

"Oh fie! don't *point*," ſaid her mother, putting down her ſtubborn finger; "nor ſay *them*, like Nancy; I am ſure you miſunderſtood.—Miſs

Laura, I am ſure, did not mean any ſuch thing."

"No, madam; and I did not ſay any ſuch thing, that I recollect," ſaid Laura, gently,

"Oh no, indeed!" cried Roſamond, warmly riſing in her ſiſter's defence. But no defence or explanation was to be heard, for every body had now gathered round Bell, to dry her tears, and to comfort her for the miſchief ſhe had done to her own cuffs.

They ſucceeded ſo well, that in about a quarter of an hour the young lady's eyes, and the reddened arches over her eyebrows came to their natural colour; and the buſineſs being thus happily huſhed up, the mother, as a reward to her daughter for her good humour, begged that Roſamond would now be ſo good as to produce her "charming preſent."

Roſamond, followed by all the company, amongſt whom, to her great joy, was her godmother, proceeded to the dreſſing-room.

"Now I am ſure," thought ſhe, "Bell will be ſurpriſed, and my godmother will ſee ſhe was right about my generoſity."

The doors of the wardrobe were opened with due ceremony, and the filigree baſket appeared in all its glory.

"Well, this is a charming preſent indeed!" ſaid the godmother, who was one of the company; "*My* Roſamond knows how to make preſents." And as ſhe ſpoke ſhe took hold of the baſket, to lift it down to the admiring audience. Scarcely had ſhe touched it when, lo! the myrtle wreath, the medallions, all dropped—the baſket fell to the ground, and only the handle remained in her hand.

All eyes were fixed upon the wreck. Exclamations of ſorrow were heard in various tones; and "Who can have done this?" was all that Roſamond could ſay. Bell ſtood in ſullen ſilence, which ſhe obſtinately preſerved in the midſt of the enquiries, which were made about the diſaſter. At length the ſervants were ſummoned, and amongſt them Nancy, Miſs Bell's maid and governeſs: ſhe affected much ſurpriſe, when ſhe ſaw what had befallen the baſket, and declared that ſhe knew nothing of the matter, but that ſhe had ſeen her miſtreſs in the morning put it quite ſafe into the wardrobe; and that, for her part, ſhe had never touched it, or thought of touching it, in her born days—"Nor Miſs Bell neither, ma'am, I can anſwer for her; for ſhe never knew of its being there, becauſe

I never ſo much as mentioned it to her, that there was ſuch a thing in the houſe, becauſe I knew Miſs Roſamond wanted to ſurpriſe her with the ſecret—ſo I never mentioned a ſentence of it—Did I, Miſs Bell?"

Bell, putting on the deceitful look which her maid had taught her, anſwered boldly, *No*; but ſhe had hold of Roſamond's hand, and at the inſtant ſhe uttered this falſehood ſhe ſqueezed it terribly.

"Why do you ſqueeze my hand ſo?" ſaid Roſamond, in a low voice; "What are you afraid of?"

"Afraid of!" cried Bell, turning angrily; "I'm not afraid of any thing—I've nothing to be afraid about."

"Nay, I did not ſay you had," whiſpered Roſamond; "But only if you did by accident—You know what I

mean—I ſhould not be angry if you did —Only ſay ſo."

"I ſay I did not!" cried Bell, furiouſly; "Mamma!—Mamma!—Nancy! my couſin Roſamond won't believe me! that's very hard—It's very rude! and I won't bear it—I won't."

"Don't be angry, love—don't;" ſaid the maid.

"Nobody ſuſpects you, darling;" ſaid her mother.——"But ſhe has too much ſenſibility.——Don't cry, love, nobody ſuſpected you."

"But you know," continued ſhe, turning to the maid, "ſomebody muſt have done this, and I muſt know how it was done; Miſs Roſamond's charming preſent muſt not be ſpoiled in this way, in my houſe, without my taking proper notice of it.——I aſſure you I am very angry about it, Roſamond."

Roſamond did not rejoice in her anger, and had nearly made a ſad miſtake, by ſpeaking loud her thoughts—"*I was very fooliſh*——" ſhe began and ſtopped.

"Ma'am," cried the maid, ſuddenly, "I'll venture to ſay I know who did it."

"Who?" ſaid every one eagerly.

"Who?" ſaid Bell, trembling.

"Why, Miſs, don't you recollect that little girl with the lace, that we ſaw peeping about in the paſſage: I'm ſure ſhe muſt have done it, for here ſhe was by herſelf half an hour or more, and not another creature has been in miſtreſs's dreſſing-room, to my certain knowledge, ſince morning. Thoſe ſort of people have ſo much curioſity, I'm ſure ſhe muſt have been meddling with it;" added the maid.

"Oh yes, that's the thing," ſaid the miſtreſs, decidedly.——"Well, Miſs Roſamond, for your comfort, ſhe ſhall never come into my houſe again."

"Oh, that would not comfort me at all," ſaid Roſamond; "beſides, we are not ſure that ſhe did it; and if——" A ſingle knock at the door was heard at this inſtant: it was the little girl, who came to be paid for her lace.

"Call her in," ſaid the lady of the houſe; "let us ſee her directly."

The maid, who was afraid that the girl's innocence would appear if ſhe were produced, heſitated; but upon her miſtreſs's repeating her commands, ſhe was forced to obey.

The child came in with a look of ſimplicity; but when ſhe ſaw the room full of company ſhe was a little abaſhed.

Roſamond and Laura looked at her, and at one another with ſurpriſe; for it was the ſame little girl whom they had ſeen weaving lace.

"Is not it ſhe?" whiſpered Roſamond to her ſiſter.

"Yes it is; but huſh," ſaid Laura, "ſhe does not know us.—Don't ſay a word, let us hear what ſhe will ſay." Laura got behind the reſt of the company as ſhe ſpoke, ſo that the little girl could not ſee her.

"Vaſtly well!" ſaid Bell's mother; "I am waiting to ſee how long you will have the aſſurance to ſtand there with that innocent look. Did you ever ſee that baſket before?"

"Yes; ma'am," ſaid the girl.

"*Yes, ma'am,*" cried the maid, "and what elſe do you know about it?—You had better confeſs it at once, and Miſtreſs perhaps will ſay no more about it."

"Yes, do confeſs it;" added Bell, earneſtly.

"Confeſs what, madam?" ſaid the little girl; "I never touched the baſket, madam."

"You never *touched* it; but you confeſs," interrupted Bell's mother, "that you *did ſee* it before—And pray how came you to ſee it? you muſt have opened my wardrobe."

"No indeed, ma'am," ſaid the little girl; "but I was waiting in the paſſage, ma'am, and this door was partly open; and looking at the maid, you know, I could not help ſeeing it."

"Why, how could you ſee it through the doors of my wardrobe?" rejoined the lady.

The maid, frightened, pulled the little girl by the ſleeve.

"Anſwer me," ſaid the lady, "where did you ſee this baſket?"

Another ſtronger pull.

"I ſaw it, madam, in her hands," looking at the maid; "and——"

"Well, and what became of it afterwards?"

"Ma'am," heſitating, "Miſs pulled, and by accident——I believe, I ſaw, ma'am——Miſs, you know what I ſaw."

"I do not know—I do not know: and if I did you had no buſineſs there—and mamma won't believe you, I am ſure."

But every body elſe did, and their eyes were fixed upon Bell in a manner which made her feel rather aſhamed.

"What do you all look at me ſo for?—Why do you all look ſo?—And am I to be ſhamed upon my birth-

day?" cried ſhe, burſting into a roar of paſſion; "and all for this naſty thing!" added ſhe, puſhing away the remains of the baſket, and looking angrily at Roſamond.

"Bell! Bell! Oh fie! fie! now I *am* aſhamed of you—that's quite rude to your couſin," ſaid her mother, who was more ſhocked at her daughter's want of politeneſs than at her falſehood. "Take her away, Nancy, till ſhe has done crying;" added ſhe to the maid, who accordingly carried off her pupil.

Roſamond, during this ſcene, eſpecially at the moment when her preſent was puſhed away with ſuch diſdain, had been making reflections upon the nature of true generoſity. A ſmile from her father, who ſtood by, a ſilent ſpectator of the cataſtrophe of the filigree baſket, gave riſe to theſe reflections; nor were

they entirely diſſipated by the condolence of the reſt of the company, nor even by the praiſes of her god-mother, who to condole her ſaid—"Well, my dear Roſamond, I admire your generous ſpirit. You know I prophecied that your half-guinea would be gone the ſooneſt—Did I not, Laura?" ſaid ſhe, appealing in a ſarcaſtic tone to where ſhe thought Laura was.—"Where is Laura? I don't ſee her."

Laura came forward.

"You are too *prudent* to throw away your money like your ſiſter; your half-guinea, I'll anſwer for it, is ſnug in your pocket—Is it not?"

"No, madam;" anſwered ſhe in a low voice. But low as the voice was, the poor little lace-girl heard it; and now, for the firſt time, fixing her eyes upon Laura, recollected her benefactreſs.

"Oh, that's the young lady!" ſhe exclaimed, in a tone of joyful gratitude —"The good!—good young lady, who gave me the half-guinea, and would not ſtay to be thanked for it—but I *will* thank her now."

"The half-guinea, Laura!" ſaid her godmother——"What is all this?"

"I'll tell you, madam, if you pleaſe," ſaid the little girl.

It was not in expectation of being praiſed for it, that Laura had been generous, and therefore every body was really touched with the hiſtory of the weaving-pillow; and whilſt they praiſed, felt a certain degree of reſpect, which is not always felt by thoſe who pour forth eulogiums. *Reſpect* is not an improper word, even applied to a child of Laura's age; for let the age or ſituation of the perſon be what it may, they command reſpect who deſerve it.

"Ah, madam!" ſaid Roſamond to her godmother, "now you ſee—you ſee ſhe is *not* a little miſer: I'm ſure that's better than waſting half-a-guinea upon a filigree baſket—Is it not, ma'am?" ſaid ſhe, with an eagerneſs which ſhewed that ſhe had forgotten all her own misfortunes in ſympathy with her ſiſter.—"This is being *really generous* father, is it not?"

"Yes, Roſamond," ſaid her father, and he kiſſed her—"this *is* being really generous. It is not only by giving away money that we can ſhew generoſity, it is by giving up to others any thing that we like ourſelves: and therefore," added he, ſmiling, "it is really generous of you to give your ſiſter the thing you like beſt of all others."

"The thing I like the beſt of all others, father," ſaid Roſamond, half

pleaſed, half vexed; "what is that I wonder?—You don't mean *praiſe*, do you, ſir?"

"Nay, you muſt decide that, Roſamond."

"Why, ſir," ſaid ſhe, ingenuouſly, "perhaps it *was* ONCE the thing I liked beſt; but the pleaſure I have juſt felt, makes me like ſomething elſe better."

SIMPLE SUSAN.

CHAPTER I.

" Waked, as her cuſtom was, before the day,
" To do the obſervance due to ſprightly May."

DRYDEN.

IN a retired hamlet on the borders of Wales, between Oſweſtry and Shrewſbury, it is ſtill the cuſtom to celebrate the firſt of May.—The children of the village, who look forward to this rural feſtival with joyful eagerneſs, uſually meet on the laſt day of April to make up their noſegays for the morning, and to chooſe their queen.—Their cuſtomary place of meeting is at a hawthorn, which

ſtands in a little green nook, open on one ſide to a ſhady lane, and ſeparated on the other ſide by a thick ſweet-briar and hawthorn hedge from the garden of an attorney.

This attorney began the world with —nothing—but he contrived to ſcrape together a good deal of money, every body knew how.—He built a new houſe at the entrance of the village, and had a large well-fenced garden; yet, notwithſtanding his fences, he never felt himſelf ſecure; ſuch were his litigious habits, and his ſuſpicious temper, that he was conſtantly at variance with his ſimple and peaceable neighbours.—Some pig, or dog, or goat, or gooſe, was for ever treſpaſſing:—his complaints and his extortions wearied and alarmed the whole hamlet.—The paths in his fields were at length unfrequented,—his ſtiles were

blocked up with ſtones or ſtuffed with brambles and briars, ſo that not a goſling could creep under, or a giant get over them—and ſo careful were even the village children of giving offence to this irritable man of the law, that they would not venture to fly a kite near his fields, leſt it ſhould entangle in his trees, or fall upon his meadow.

Mr. Caſe, for this was the name of our attorney, had a ſon and a daughter, to whoſe education he had not time to attend, as his whole ſoul was intent upon accumulating for them a fortune. —For ſeveral years he ſuffered his children to run wild in the village, but ſuddenly, upon his being appointed to a conſiderable agency, he began to think of making his children a little genteel. He ſent his ſon to learn Latin; he hired a maid to wait upon his daughter Barbara,

and he ſtrictly forbade her *thenceforward* to keep company with any of the poor children, who had hitherto been her playfellows:—they were not ſorry for this prohibition, becauſe ſhe had been their tyrant rather than their companion; ſhe was vexed to obſerve, that her abſence was not regretted, and ſhe was mortified to perceive, that ſhe could not humble them by any diſplay of airs and finery.

There was one poor girl amongſt her former aſſociates, to whom ſhe had a peculiar diſlike—Suſan Price—a ſweet-tempered, modeſt, ſprightly, induſtrious laſs, who was the pride and delight of the village.—Her father rented a ſmall farm, and, unfortunately for him, he lived near—attorney Caſe.—Barbara uſed often to ſit at her window watching Suſan at work—ſometimes ſhe ſaw

her in the neat garden raking the beds or weeding the borders; ſometimes ſhe was kneeling at her beehive with freſh flowers for her bees;—ſometimes ſhe was in the poultry-yard ſcattering corn from her ſieve amongſt the eager chickens; and in the evening ſhe was often ſeated in a little honey-ſuckle arbour, with a clean, light, three-legged, deal table before her, upon which ſhe put her plain-work.—Suſan had been taught to work neatly by her good mother, who was very fond of her, and to whom ſhe was moſt gratefully attached.—Mrs. Price was an intelligent, active, domeſtic woman, but her health was not robuſt; ſhe earned money, however, by taking in plainwork, and ſhe was famous for baking excellent bread and breakfaſt cakes. She was reſpected in the village for her conduct as a wife and as a mother,

and all were eager to ſhew her attention.—At her door the firſt branch of hawthorn was always placed on May-morning, and her Suſan was uſually Queen of the May.

It was now time to chooſe the Queen.—The ſetting ſun ſhone full upon the pink bloſſoms of the hawthorn, when the merry group aſſembled upon their little green.—Barbara was now walking in ſullen ſtate in her father's garden; ſhe heard the buſy voices in the lane, and ſhe concealed herſelf behind the high hedge, that ſhe might liſten to their converſation.

"Where's Suſan?"—were the firſt unwelcome words which ſhe overheard.——"Aye, where's Suſan," repeated Philip, ſtopping ſhort in the middle of a new tune, that he was playing on his pipe,—"I wiſh Suſan would come! I

want her to ſing me this ſame tune over again, I have not it yet."

"And I wiſh Suſan would come, I'm ſure," cried a little girl, whoſe lap was full of primroſes—"Suſan will give me ſome thread to tie up my noſegays, and ſhe'll ſhew me where the freſh violets grow, and ſhe has promiſed to give me a great bunch of her double cowſlips to wear to-morrow.—I wiſh ſhe would come."

"Nothing can be done without "Suſan!—She always ſhews us where "the niceſt flowers are to be found in "the lanes and meadows," ſaid they. "—She muſt make up the garlands— "and ſhe ſhall be Queen of the May!" exclaimed a multitude of little voices.

"But ſhe does not come!" ſaid Philip.

Roſe, who was her particular friend,

now came forward, to aſſure the impatient aſſembly, " that ſhe would anſwer for it Suſan would come as ſoon as ſhe poſſibly could, and that ſhe probably was detained by buſineſs at home."—The little electors thought, that all buſineſs ſhould give way to theirs, and Roſe was diſpatched to ſummon her friend immediately.

" Tell her to make haſte," cried Philip—" Attorney Caſe dined at the Abbey to-day—luckily for us; if he comes home, and finds us here, may be he'll drive us away, for he ſays this bit of ground belongs to his garden, though that is not true, I'm ſure, for Farmer Price knows, and ſays, it was always open to the road.—The attorney wants to get our play-ground, ſo he does—I wiſh he and his daughter Bab, or Miſs Barbara, as ſhe muſt now be

called, were a hundred miles off, out of our way, I know.—No later than yeſterday ſhe threw down my nine-pins in one of her ill humours, as ſhe was walking by with her gown all trailing in the duſt."

"Yes," cried Mary, the little primroſe-girl, "her gown is always trailing, ſhe does not hold it up nicely, like Suſan; and with all her fine clothes ſhe never looks half ſo neat.—Mamma ſays ſhe wiſhes I may be like Suſan, when I grow up to be a great girl, and ſo do I.—I ſhould not like to look conceited as Barbara does, if I was ever ſo rich."

"Rich or poor," ſaid Philip, "it does not become a girl to look conceited, much leſs *bold*, as Barbara did the other day, when ſhe was ſtanding at her father's door, without a hat upon

her head, ſtaring at the ſtrange gentleman who ſtopped hereabout to let his horſe drink.—I know what he thought of Bab by his looks, and of Suſan too—for Suſan was in her garden, bending down a branch of the laburnum-tree, looking at its yellow flowers, which were juſt come out; and when the gentleman aſked her how many miles it was from Shrewſbury, ſhe anſwered him ſo modeſt!—not baſhful, like as if ſhe had never ſeen nobody before—but juſt right—and then ſhe pulled on her ſtraw hat, which was fallen back with her looking up at the laburnum, and ſhe went her ways home, and the gentleman ſays to me, after ſhe was gone, 'Pray, who is that neat modeſt girl?'

"But I wiſh Suſan would come," cried Philip, interrupting himſelf.

Suſan was all this time, as her friend Roſe rightly gueſſed, buſy at home.—She was detained by her father's returning later than uſual—his ſupper was ready for him nearly an hour before he came home, and Suſan ſwept up the aſhes twice, and twice put on wood to make a chearful blaze for him; but at laſt, when he did come in, he took no notice of the blaze or of Suſan, and when his wife aſked him how he did, he made no anſwer, but ſtood with his back to the fire, looking very gloomy.—Suſan put his ſupper upon the table, and ſet his own chair for him, but he puſhed away the chair and turned from the table, ſaying—

"I ſhall eat nothing, child? why have you ſuch a fire, to roaſt me at this time of the year?"

"You ſaid yeſterday, father, I thought,

that you liked a little chearful wood fire in the evening, and there was a great ſhower of hail; your coat is quite wet, we muſt dry it."

"Take it then, child," ſaid he, pulling it off—"I ſhall ſoon have no coat to dry—and take my hat too," ſaid he, throwing it upon the ground.

Suſan hung up his hat, put his coat over the back of a chair to dry, and then ſtood anxiouſly looking at her mother, who was not well; ſhe had this day fatigued herſelf with baking, and now alarmed by her huſband's moody behaviour, ſhe ſat down pale and trembling.—He threw himſelf into a chair, folded his arms, and fixed his eyes upon the fire—Suſan was the firſt who ventured to break ſilence. Happy the father who has ſuch a daughter as Suſan!—her unaltered ſweetneſs of tem-

per, and her playful affectionate careſſes, at laſt ſomewhat diſſipated her father's melancholy;—he could not be prevailed upon to eat any of the ſupper, which had been prepared for him; however, with a faint ſmile, he told Suſan, that he thought he could eat one of her Guinea hen's eggs.—She thanked him, and with that nimble alacrity, which marks the deſire to pleaſe, ſhe ran to her neat chicken yard—but, alas! her Guinea hen was not there!—it had ſtrayed into the attorney's garden—ſhe ſaw it through the paling, and timidly opening the little gate, ſhe aſked Miſs Barbara, who was walking ſlowly by, to let her come in and take her Guinea hen.—Barbara, who was at this inſtant reflecting, with no agreeable feelings, upon the converſation of the village children, to which ſhe had recently

liſtened, ſtarted when ſhe heard Suſan's voice, and with a proud, ill-humoured look and voice refuſed her requeſt.—"Shut the gate," ſaid ſhe, "you have no buſineſs in *our* garden, and as for your hen I ſhall keep it, it is always flying in here, and plaguing us, and my father ſays it is a treſpaſſer, and he told me I might catch it, and keep it the next time it got in, and it is in now." Then Barbara called to her maid Betty, and bid her catch the miſchievous hen.

"Oh my Guinea hen! my pretty Guinea hen," cried Suſan, as they hunted the frightened, ſcreaming creature from corner to corner.

"Here we have got it!" ſaid Betty, holding it faſt by the legs.

"Now pay damages, Queen Suſan, or good bye to your pretty Guinea hen!" ſaid Barbara, in an inſulting tone.

"Damages! what damages?" ſaid Suſan, "tell me what I muſt pay."

"A ſhilling," ſaid Barbara.

"Oh if ſixpence would do!" ſaid Suſan, "I have but ſixpence of my own in the world, and here it is."

"It won't do," ſaid Barbara, turning her back.

"Nay, but hear me," cried Suſan, "let me at leaſt come in to look for it's eggs. I only want *one* for my father's ſupper; you ſhall have all the reſt."

"What's your father or his ſupper to us; is he ſo nice that he can eat none but Guinea hen's eggs?" ſaid Barbara; "if you want your hen and your eggs, pay for them and you'll have them."

"I have but ſixpence, and you ſay that won't do," ſaid Suſan with a ſigh, as ſhe looked at her favourite, which

was in the maid's grafping hands, ſtruggling and ſcreaming in vain.

Suſan retired diſconſolate.—At the door of her father's cottage ſhe ſaw her friend Roſe, who was juſt come to ſummon her to the hawthorn buſh.

"They are all at the hawthorn, and I'm come for you, we can do nothing without *you*, dear Suſan," cried Roſe, running to meet her, the moment ſhe ſaw her; "you are choſen Queen of the May—come, make haſte; but what's the matter why do you look ſo ſad?"

"Ah!" ſaid Suſan, "don't wait for me, I can't come to you; but," added ſhe, pointing to the tuft of double cowſlips in the garden, "gather thoſe for poor little Mary, I promiſed them to her; and tell her the violets are under the hedge juſt oppoſite the turnſtile,

on the right as we go to church. Good bye, never mind me—I can't come—I can't ſtay, for my father wants me."

"But don't turn away your face, I won't keep you a moment, only tell me what's the matter," ſaid her friend, following her into the cottage.

"Oh, nothing, not much," ſaid Suſan; "only that I wanted the egg in a great hurry for father, it would not have vexed me—to be ſure I ſhould have clipped my Guinea hen's wings, and then ſhe could not have flown over the hedge—but let us think no more about it now," added ſhe, twinkling away a tear.

When Roſe, however, learnt that her friend's Guinea hen was detained priſoner by the attorney's daughter, ſhe exclaimed with all the honeſt warmth

of indignation, and inſtantly ran back to tell the ſtory to her companions.

"Barbara! aye! like father, like daughter," cried Farmer Price, ſtarting from the thoughtful attitude in which he had been fixed, and drawing his chair cloſer to his wife.

"You ſee ſomething is amiſs with me, wife—I'll tell you what it is." As he lowered his voice, Suſan, who was not ſure that he wiſhed ſhe ſhould hear what he was going to ſay, retired from behind his chair.—"Suſan don't go; ſit you down here, my ſweet Suſan," ſaid he, making room for her upon his chair; "I believe I was a little croſs when I came in firſt to-night, but I had ſomething to vex me, as you ſhall hear."

"About a fortnight ago, you know, wife," continued he, "there was a bal-

loting in our town for the militia, now at that time I wanted but ten days of forty years of age, and the attorney told me, I was a fool for not calling myſelf plump forty; but the truth is the truth, and it is what I think fitteſt to be ſpoken at all times, come what will of it—ſo I was drawn for a militia-man, but when I thought how loth you and I would be to part, I was main glad to hear that I could get off by paying eight or nine guineas for a ſubſtitute, only I had not the nine guineas, for you know we had bad luck with our ſheep this year, and they died away one after another; but that was no excuſe, ſo I went to Attorney Caſe, and with a power of difficulty I got him to lend me the money, for which, to be ſure, I gave him ſomething, and left my leaſe of our farm with him, as he inſiſted

upon it, by way of ſecurity for the loan. Attorney Caſe is too many for me; he has found what he calls *a flaw* in my leaſe, and the leaſe he tells me is not worth a farthing, and that he can turn us all out of our farm to-morrow if he pleaſes; and ſure enough he will pleaſe, for I have thwarted him this day, and he ſwears he'll be revenged of me; indeed he has begun with me badly enough already.—I'm not come to the worſt part of my ſtory yet——"

Here Farmer Price made a dead ſtop, and his wife and Suſan looked up in his face breathleſs with anxiety.

"It muſt come out," ſaid he with a ſhort ſigh; "I muſt leave you in three days, wife."

"Muſt you!" ſaid his wife, in a faint reſigned voice, "Suſan, love, open the window."

Suſan ran to open the window, and then returned to ſupport her mother's head.

When ſhe came a little to herſelf, ſhe ſat up, begged that her huſband would go on, and that nothing might be concealed from her.

Her huſband had no wiſh indeed to conceal any thing from a wife he loved ſo well, but ſtout as he was, and ſteady to his maxim, that the truth was the thing the fitteſt to be ſpoken at all times, his voice faultered, and it was with ſome difficulty, that he brought himſelf to ſpeak the whole truth at this moment.

The fact was this: Caſe met Farmer Price as he was coming home, whiſtling, from a new-ploughed field; the Attorney had juſt dined at *the Abbey*—the Abbey was the family ſeat of an opulent

Baronet in the neighbourhood, to whom Mr. Caſe had been agent; the Baronet died ſuddenly, and his eſtate and title devolved to a younger brother, who was now juſt arrived in the country, and to whom Mr. Caſe was eager to pay his court, in hopes of obtaining his favour. Of the agency he flattered himſelf that he was pretty ſecure, and he thought that he might aſſume the tone of command towards the tenants, eſpecially towards one who was ſome guineas in his debt, and in whoſe leaſe there was a flaw.

Accoſting the Farmer in a haughty manner, the Attorney began with, "So, Farmer Price, a word with you, if you pleaſe, walk on here, man, beſide my horſe, and you'll hear me.—You have changed your opinion, I hope, about that bit of land, that corner at the end of my garden."

"As how, Mr. Caſe?" ſaid the Farmer.

"As how, man—why you ſaid ſomething about its not belonging to me, when you heard me talk of encloſing it the other day."

"So I did," ſaid Price, "and ſo I do."

Provoked and aſtoniſhed at the firm tone, in which theſe words were pronounced, the Attorney was upon the point of ſwearing, that he would have his revenge; but as his paſſions were habitually attentive to the *letter* of the law, he refrained from any haſty expreſſion, which might, he was aware, in a court of juſtice, be hereafter brought againſt him.

"My good friend, Mr. Price," ſaid he, in a ſoft voice, and pale with ſuppreſſed rage—he forced a ſmile—"I'm

under the neceſſity of calling in the money I lent you ſome time ago, and you will pleaſe to take notice, that it muſt be paid to-morrow morning. I wiſh you a good evening. You have the money ready for me, I dare ſay."

"No," ſaid the Farmer, "not a guinea of it; but John Simſon, who was my ſubſtitute, has not left our village yet, I'll get the money back from him, and go myſelf, if ſo be it muſt be ſo, into the militia—ſo I will."

The Attorney did not expect ſuch a determination, and he repreſented in a friendly hypocritical tone to Price, "that he had no wiſh to drive him to ſuch an extremity, that it would be the height of folly in him *to run his head againſt a wall for no purpoſe* You don't mean to take the corner into your own garden, do you Price?" ſaid he.

"I," ſaid the Farmer, "God forbid! it's none of mine, I never take what does not belong to me."

"True, right, very proper, of courſe," ſaid Mr. Caſe; "but then you have no intereſt in life in the land in queſtion?"

"None."

"Then why ſo ſtiff about it, Price? all I want of you is to ſay——"

"To ſay that black is white, which I won't do, Mr. Caſe; the ground is a thing not worth talking of, but it's neither your's nor mine; in my memory, ſince the *new* lane was made, it has always been open to the pariſh, and no man ſhall encloſe it with my good will.—Truth is truth, and muſt be ſpoken; juſtice is juſtice, and ſhould be done, Mr. Attorney."

"And law is law, Mr. Farmer, and ſhall have its courſe, to your coſt," cried the

Attorney, exaſperated by the dauntleſs ſpirit of this village Hamden.

Here they parted.—The glow of enthuſiam, the pride of virtue, which made our hero brave, could not render him inſenſible. As he drew nearer home many melancholy thoughts preſſed upon his heart, he paſſed the door of his own cottage with reſolute ſteps, however, and went through the village in ſearch of the man who had engaged to be his ſubſtitute. He found him, told him how the matter ſtood, and luckily the man, who had not yet ſpent the money, was willing to return it, as there were many others had been drawn for the militia, who, he obſerved, would be glad to give him the ſame price, or more, for his ſervices.

The moment Price got the money he haſtened to Mr. Caſe's houſe, walked

ſtraight forward into his room, and laying the money down upon his deſk, "There, Mr. Attorney, are your nine guineas, count them, now I have done with you.

"Not yet," ſaid the Attorney, jingling the money triumphantly in his hand; we'll give you a taſte of the law, my good Sir, or I'm miſtaken.—You forgot the flaw in your leaſe, which I have ſafe in this deſk."

"Ah, my leaſe," ſaid the Farmer, who had almoſt forgot to aſk for it till he was thus put in mind of it by the Attorney's imprudent threat.

"Give me my leaſe, Mr. Caſe; I've paid my money, you have no right to keep the leaſe any longer, whether it is a bad one or a good one."

"Pardon me," ſaid the Attorney, locking his deſk, and putting the key

into his pocket, "poſſeſſion, my honeſt friend," cried he, ſtriking his hand upon the deſk, "poſſeſſion is nine points of the law. Good night to you. I cannot in conſcience return a leaſe to a tenant in which I know there is a capital flaw; it is my duty to ſhew it to my employer, or, in other words, to your new landlord, whoſe agent I have good reaſons to expect I ſhall be. You will live to repent your obſtinacy, Mr. Price. Your ſervant, Sir."

Price retired melancholy, but not intimidated.

Many a man returns home with a gloomy countenance, who has not quite ſo much cauſe for vexation.

When Suſan heard her father's ſtory, ſhe quite forgot her Guinea hen, and her whole ſoul was intent upon her poor mother, who, notwithſtanding her ut-

moſt exertion, could not ſupport herſelf under this ſudden ſtroke of misfortune.—In the middle of the night Suſan was called up; her mother's fever ran high for ſome hours, but towards morning it abated, and ſhe fell into a ſoft ſleep with Suſan's hand locked faſt in her's.

Suſan ſat motionleſs, and breathed ſoftly, leſt ſhe ſhould diſturb her. The ruſh-light, which ſtood beſide the bed, was now burnt low, the long ſhadow of the tall wicker chair flitted, faded, appeared and vaniſhed, as the flame roſe and ſunk in the ſocket. Suſan was afraid, that the diſagreeable ſmell might waken her mother, and gently diſengaging her hand, ſhe went on tiptoe to extinguiſh the candle—all was ſilent, the grey light of the morning was now ſpreading over every object; the ſun

roſe ſlowly, and Suſan ſtood at the lattice window, looking through the ſmall leaded croſs-barred panes at the ſplendid ſpectacle. A few birds began to chirp, but as Suſan was liſtening to them her mother ſtarted in her ſleep, and ſpoke unintelligibly.—Suſan hung up a white apron before the window to keep out the light, and juſt then ſhe heard the ſound of muſic at a diſtance in the village. As it approached nearer, ſhe knew that it was Philip playing upon his pipe and tabor; ſhe diſtinguiſhed the merry voices of her companions "caroling in honour of the May," and ſoon ſhe ſaw them coming towards her father's cottage, with branches and garlands in their hands. She opened quick, but gently, the latch of the door, and ran out to meet them.

"Here ſhe is!—Here's Suſan!" they

exclaimed joyfully, "Here's the Queen of the May." "And here's her crown!" cried Roſe, preſſing forward; but Suſan put her finger upon her lips, and pointed to her mother's window—Philip's pipe ſtopped inſtantly.

"Thank you," ſaid Suſan, "my mother is ill, I can't leave her you know." Then gently putting aſide the crown, her companions bid her ſay who ſhould wear it for her.

"Will you, dear Roſe?" ſaid ſhe, placing the garland upon her friend's head—"It's a charming May morning," added ſhe, with a ſmile; "good bye. We ſhan't hear your voices or the pipe when you have turned the corner into the village, ſo you need only ſtop till then, Philip."

"I ſhall ſtop for all day," ſaid Philip, "I've no mind to play any more."

"Good bye, poor Suſan; it is a pity you can't come with us," ſaid all the children, and little Mary ran after Suſan to the cottage door.

"I forgot to thank you," ſaid ſhe, "for the double cowſlips; look how pretty they are, and ſmell how ſweet the violets are in my boſom, and kiſs me quick, for I ſhall be left behind."

Suſan kiſſed the little breathleſs girl, and returned ſoftly to the ſide of her mother's bed.

"How grateful that child is to me for a cowſlip only! How can I be grateful enough to ſuch a mother as this?" ſaid Suſan to herſelf, as ſhe bent over her ſleeping mother's pale countenance.

Her mother's unfiniſhed knitting lay upon a table near the bed, and Suſan ſat down in her wicker arm chair, and

went on with the row, in the middle of which her hand ſtopped the preceding evening.

"She taught me to knit, ſhe taught me every thing that I know," thought Suſan, "and beſt of all, ſhe taught me to love her, to wiſh to be like her."

Her mother, when ſhe awakened, felt much refreſhed by her tranquil ſleep, and obſerving that it was a delightful morning, ſaid that ſhe had been dreaming ſhe heard muſic, but that the drum frightened her, becauſe ſhe thought it was the ſignal for her huſband to be carried away by a whole regiment of ſoldiers, who had pointed their bayonets at him. But that was but a dream, Suſan; I wakened, and knew it was a dream, and I then fell aſleep, and have ſlept ſoundly ever ſince."

How painful it is to waken to the

remembrance of misfortune.—Gradually as this poor woman collected her ſcattered thoughts, ſhe recalled the circumſtances of the preceding evening; ſhe was too certain, that ſhe had heard from her huſband's own lips the words, *I muſt leave you in three days*, and ſhe wiſhed that ſhe could ſleep again, and think it all a dream.

"But he'll want, he'll want a hundred things," ſaid ſhe, ſtarting up; "I muſt get his linen ready for him. I'm afraid it's very late, Suſan, why did you let me lie ſo long?"

"Every thing ſhall be ready, dear mother, only don't hurry yourſelf," ſaid Suſan.

And indeed her mother was ill able to bear any hurry, or to do any work this day.

Suſan's affectionate, dexterous, ſen-

ſible activity was never more wanted, or more effectual. She underſtood ſo readily, ſhe obeyed ſo exactly, and when ſhe was left to her own diſcretion, judged ſo prudently, that her mother had little trouble and no anxiety in directing her; ſhe ſaid that Suſan never did too little, or too much.

Suſan was mending her father's linen, when Roſe tapped ſoftly at the window, and beckoned to her to come out; ſhe went out.

"How does your mother do, in the firſt place?" ſaid Roſe.

"Better, thank you."

"That's well, and I have a little bit of good news for you beſides—here," ſaid ſhe, pulling out a glove, in which there was money, "we'll get the Guinea hen back again—we have all agreed about it. This is the money that has

been given to us in the village this May morning; at every door they gave ſilver—ſee how generous they have been, twelve ſhillings I aſſure you. Now we are a match for Miſs Barbara. You won't like to leave home—I'll go to Barbara, and you ſhall ſee your Guinea hen in ten minutes."

Roſe hurried away, pleaſed with her commiſſion, and eager to accompliſh her buſineſs.

Miſs Barbara's maid Betty was the firſt perſon that was viſible at the Attorney's houſe.

Roſe inſiſted upon ſeeing Miſs Barbara herſelf, and ſhe was ſhewn into a parlour to the young lady, who was reading a dirty novel, which ſhe put under a heap of law papers as they entered.

"Dear, how you *ſtartled* me! is it

only you?" ſaid ſhe to her maid, but as ſoon as ſhe ſaw Roſe behind the maid ſhe put on a ſcornful air.

"Could not ye ſay I was not at home, Betty.—Well, my good girl, what brings you here? ſomething to borrow or beg, I ſuppoſe."

May every ambaſſador—every ambaſſador in as good a cauſe, anſwer with as much dignity and moderation as Roſe replied to Barbara upon the preſent occaſion.

She aſſured her, that the perſon from whom ſhe came did not ſend her either to beg or borrow, that ſhe was able to pay the full value of that for which ſhe came to aſk; and producing her well-filled purſe, "I believe that this is a very good ſhilling," ſaid ſhe, "If you don't like it I will change it; and now you will be ſo good as to give me

Suſan's Guinea hen; it is in her name I aſk for it."

"No matter in whoſe name you aſk for it," replied Barbara, "you will not have it—take up your ſhilling, if you pleaſe.—I would have taken a ſhilling yeſterday, if it had been paid at the time properly; but I told Suſan, that if it was not paid then I ſhould keep the hen, and ſo I ſhall I promiſe her.—You may go back, and tell her ſo."

The Attorney's daughter had, whilſt Roſe opened her negociation, meaſured the depth of her purſe with a keen eye, and her penetration diſcovered that it contained at leaſt ten ſhillings; with proper management ſhe had ſome hopes that the Guinea hen might be made to bring in at leaſt half the money.

Roſe, who was of a warm temper, not quite ſo fit a match as ſhe had

thought herſelf for the wily Barbara, incautiouſly exclaimed, "Whatever it coſts us, we are determined to have Suſan's favourite hen; ſo if one ſhilling won't do, take two, and if two won't do, why take three."

The ſhillings ſounded provokingly upon the table, as ſhe threw them down one after another, and Barbara coolly replied, "Three won't do."

"Have you no conſcience, Miſs Barbara? then take four."

Barbara ſhook her head. A fifth ſhilling was inſtantly proffered—but Bab, who now ſaw plainly that ſhe had the game in her own hands, preſerved a cold cruel ſilence.

Roſe went on rapidly, bidding ſhilling after ſhilling, till ſhe had completely emptied her purſe.

The twelve ſhillings were ſpread upon

the table—Barbara's avarice was moved, ſhe conſented for this ranſom to liberate her priſoner.

Roſe puſhed the money towards her, but juſt then recollecting that ſhe was acting for others more than for herſelf, and doubting whether ſhe had full powers to conclude ſuch an extravagant bargain, ſhe gathered up the public treaſure, and with newly-recovered prudence obſerved, that ſhe muſt go back to conſult her friends.

Her generous little friends were amazed at Barbara's meanneſs, but with one accord declared, that they were moſt willing, for their parts, to give up every farthing of the money. They all went to Suſan in a body, and told her ſo.

"There's our purſe," ſaid they, "do what you pleaſe with it."

They would not wait for one word

of thanks, but ran away, leaving only Roſe with her to ſettle the treaty for the Guinea hen.

There is a certain manner of accepting a favour, which ſhews true generoſity of mind. Many know how to give, but few know how to accept a gift properly.

Suſan was touched, but not aſtoniſhed, by the kindneſs of her young friends, and ſhe received the purſe with as much ſimplicity as ſhe would have given it.

"Well," ſaid Roſe, "ſhall I go back for the Guinea hen?"

"The Guinea hen!" ſaid Suſan, ſtarting from a reverie into which ſhe had fallen as ſhe contemplated the purſe, "Certainly I *do* long to ſee my pretty Guinea hen once more, but I was not thinking of her juſt then—I was thinking of my father."

Now Suſan had heard her mother often in the courſe of this day wiſh that ſhe had but money enough in the world to pay John Simſon for going to ſerve in the militia inſtead of her huſband. "This to be ſure will go but a little way," thought Suſan, "but ſtill it may be of ſome uſe to my father." She told her mind to Roſe, and concluded by ſaying decidedly, that "if the money was given to her to diſpoſe of as ſhe pleaſed, ſhe would give it to her father."

"It is all yours, my dear good Suſan," cried Roſe, with a look of warm approbation; "this is ſo like you!—But I'm ſorry that Miſs Bab muſt keep your Guinea hen. I would not be her for all the Guinea hens, or guineas either, in the whole world. Why, I'll anſwer for it the Guinea hen won't

make her happy, and you'll be happy *even* without—becauſe you are good.—Let me come and help you to-morrow," continued ſhe, looking at Suſan's work. "If you have any more mending work to do—I never liked work till I worked with you—I won't forget my thimble or my ſciſſars," added ſhe, laughing,—"though I uſed to forget them when I was a giddy girl. I aſſure you I am a great hand at my needle now—try me."

Suſan aſſured her friend that ſhe did not doubt the powers of her needle, and that ſhe would moſt willingly accept of her ſervices, but that, *unluckily*, ſhe had finiſhed all the needle-work that was immediately wanted.

"But do you know," ſaid ſhe, "I ſhall have a great deal of buſineſs to-morrow—but I won't tell you what it

is that I have to do, for I am afraid I ſhall not ſucceed; but if I do ſucceed, I'll come and tell you directly, becauſe you will be ſo glad of it."

Suſan, who had always been attentive to what her mother taught her, and who had often aſſiſted her when ſhe was baking bread and cakes for the family at the Abbey, had now formed the courageous, but not preſumptuous idea, that ſhe could herſelf undertake to bake a batch of bread.—One of the ſervants from the Abbey had been ſent all round the village in the morning, in ſearch of bread, and had not been able to procure any that was tolerable. Mrs. Price's laſt baking failed for want of good barm, ſhe was not now ſtrong enough to attempt another herſelf; and when the brewer's boy came with eagerneſs to tell her that he had ſome fine

freſh yeaſt for her, ſhe thanked him, but ſighed, and ſaid it would be of no uſe to her, ſhe was too ill for the work. Suſan modeſtly requeſted permiſſion to try her hand, and her mother would not refuſe her *. Accordingly ſhe went to work with much prudent care, and when her bread the next morning came out of the oven it was excellent—at leaſt her mother ſaid ſo, and ſhe was a good judge. It was ſent to the Abbey, and as the family there had not taſted any good bread ſince their arrival in the country, they alſo were earneſt and warm in its praiſe. Enquiries were made from the houſe-keeper, and they heard, with ſome ſurpriſe, that this excellent bread was made by a young girl of twelve years old. The houſe-keeper, who had known Suſan from a

* This circumſtance is founded on fact.

child, was pleaſed to have an opportunity of ſpeaking in her favor.

"She is the moſt induſtrious little creature, Ma'am, in the world," ſaid ſhe to her miſtreſs, "little I can't ſo well call her now, ſince ſhe's grown tall and ſlender to look at; and glad I am ſhe is grown up likely to look at, for handſome is that handſome does—and ſhe thinks no more of her being handſome than I do myſelf—yet ſhe has as proper a reſpect for herſelf, Ma'am, as you have; and I always ſee her neat, and with her mother, Ma'am, or fit people, as a girl ſhould be; as for her mother, ſhe doats upon her, as well ſhe may, for I ſhould myſelf if I had half ſuch a daughter; and then ſhe has two little brothers, and ſhe's as good to them, and my boy Philip ſays, taught 'em to read moret han the ſchool-miſtreſs, all

with tenderneſs and goodnature; but I beg your pardon, Ma'am, I cannot ſtop myſelf when I once begin to talk of Suſan."

"You have really ſaid enough to excite my curioſity," ſaid her miſtreſs, "pray ſend for her immediately, we can ſee her before we go out to walk."

The benevolent houſekeeper diſpatched her boy Philip for Suſan. Suſan was never in ſuch an *untidy* ſtate, that ſhe could not obey ſuch a ſummons without a long preparation. She had, it is true, been very buſy, but orderly people can be buſy and neat at the ſame time. She put on her uſual ſtraw hat, and accompanied Roſe's mother, who was going with a baſket of cleared muſlin to the Abbey.

The modeſt ſimplicity of Suſan's appearance, and the artleſs good ſenſe and

propriety of the anſwers ſhe gave to all the queſtions that were aſked her, pleaſed the ladies at the Abbey, who were good judges of character and manners.

Sir Arthur Somers had two ſiſters, ſenſible, benevolent women; they were not of that race of fine ladies who are miſerable the moment they come to *the country*; nor yet were they of that buſtling ſort, who quack and direct all their poor neighbours, for the mere love of managing, or the want of ſomething to do. They were judiciouſly generous, and whilſt they wiſhed to diffuſe happineſs, they were not peremptory in requiring that people ſhould be happy preciſely their own way. With theſe diſpoſitions, and with a well-informed brother, who, though he never wiſhed to direct, was always willing to aſſiſt in their efforts to do good, there were rea-

ſonable hopes, that theſe ladies would be a bleſſing to the poor villagers amongſt whom they were now ſettled.

As ſoon as Miſs Somers had ſpoken to Suſan, ſhe inquired for her brother; but Sir Arthur was in his ſtudy, and a gentleman was with him on buſineſs.

Suſan was deſirous of returning to her mother, and the ladies therefore would not detain her. Miſs Somers told her with a ſmile, when ſhe took leave, that ſhe would call upon her in the evening at ſix o'clock.

It was impoſſible that ſuch a grand event as Suſan's viſit to the Abbey could long remain unknown to Barbara Caſe and her goſſiping maid. They watched eagerly for the moment of her return, that they might ſatisfy their curioſity.

"There ſhe is, I declare, juſt come into her garden," cried Bab, "Ill run

in and get it all out of her, in a minute."

Bab could deſcend, without ſhame, whenever it ſuited her purpoſes, from the height of inſolent pride to the loweſt meanneſs of fawning familiarity.

Suſan was gathering ſome marygolds and ſome parſley for her mother's broth.

"So, Suſan," ſaid Bab, who came cloſe up to her before ſhe perceived it, "how goes the world with you to-day."

"My mother is rather better, to-day, ſhe ſays, Ma'am—thank you," replied Suſan, coldly but civilly.

"*Ma'am*, dear, how polite we are grown of a ſudden!" cried Bab, winking at her maid.—"One may ſee you've been in good company this morning—Hey, Suſan—come let's hear about it?"—"Did you ſee the ladies themſelves,

or was it only the houſekeeper ſent for you?" ſaid the maid.

"What room did you go into?" continued Bab; "Did you ſee Miſs Somers, or Sir Arthur?"

"Miſs Somers."

"La! ſhe ſaw Miſs Somers! Betty, I muſt hear about it. Can't you ſtop gathering thoſe things for a minute, and chat a bit with us, Suſan?"

"I can't ſtay indeed, Miſs Barbara, for my mother's broth is juſt wanted, and I'm in a hurry." Suſan ran home.

"Lord, her head is full of broth now," ſaid Bab to her maid, "and ſhe has not a word for herſelf, though ſhe has been abroad. My papa may well call her *Simple Suſan*—for ſimple ſhe is, and ſimple ſhe will be all the world over; for my part I think ſhe's little better than a downright ſimpleton; but

however, ſimple or not, I'll get what I want out of her; ſhe'll be able to ſpeak may be when ſhe has ſettled the grand matter of the broth. I'll ſtep in and aſk to ſee her mother, that will put her in a good humour in a trice."

Barbara followed Suſan into the cottage, and found her occupied with the grand affair of the broth.

"Is it ready," ſaid Bab, peeping into the pot that was over the fire, "dear, how ſavory it ſmells! I'll wait till you go in with it to your mother, for I muſt aſk her how ſhe does myſelf."

"Will you pleaſe to ſit down then, Miſs," ſaid Simple Suſan, with a ſmile, for at this inſtant ſhe forgot the Guinea hen. "I have but juſt put the parſley into the broth, but it will ſoon be ready."

During this interval Bab employed

herſelf much to her own ſatisfaction, in croſs-queſtioning Suſan. She was rather provoked indeed that ſhe could not learn exactly how each of the ladies was dreſt, and what there was to be for dinner at the Abbey; and ſhe was curious beyond meaſure to find out what Miſs Somers meant, by ſaying that ſhe would call at Mr. Price's cottage at ſix o'clock in the evening.—"What do you think ſhe could mean?"

"I thought ſhe meant what ſhe ſaid," replied Suſan, "that ſhe would come here at ſix o'clock."

"Aye, that's as plain as a pike ſtaff," ſaid Barbara, "but what elſe did ſhe mean, think you? People you know don't always mean exactly, downright, neither more nor leſs than they ſay."

"Not always," ſaid Suſan, with an arch ſmile, which convinced Barbara that ſhe was not quite a ſimpleton.

"*Not always*," repeated Barbara colouring,—"Oh then I ſuppoſe you have ſome gueſs at what Miſs Somers meant."

"No," ſaid Suſan, "I was not thinking about Miſs Somers, when I ſaid not always."

"How nice that broth does look," reſumed Barbara, after a pauſe.

Suſan had now poured the broth into a baſon, and as ſhe ſtrewed over it the bright orange marygolds it looked very tempting; ſhe taſted it, and added now a little ſalt, and now a little more, till ſhe thought it was juſt to her mother's taſte.

"Oh, *I* muſt take it," ſaid Bab, taking the baſon up greedily.

"Won't you take a ſpoon," ſaid Suſan, trembling at the large mouthfuls which Barbara ſucked up with a terrible noiſe.

"Take a ſpoonful, indeed!" exclaimed Barbara, ſetting down the baſon in high anger.—"The next time I taſte your broth you ſhall affront me, if you dare! The next time I ſet my foot in this houſe, you ſhall be as ſaucy to me as you pleaſe." And ſhe flounced out of the houſe repeating, "*Take a ſpoon, pig*, was what you meant to ſay."

Suſan ſtood in amazement at the beginning of this ſpeech, but the concluding words explained to her the myſtery.

Some years before this time, when Suſan was a very little girl, and could ſcarcely ſpeak plain, as ſhe was eating a baſon of bread and milk for her ſupper at the cottage door, a great pig came up, and put his noſe into the baſon. Suſan was willing, that the pig

ſhould have ſome ſhare of the bread and milk, but as ſhe eat with a ſpoon, and he with his large mouth, ſhe preſently diſcovered, that he was likely to have more than his ſhare, and in a ſimple tone of expoſtulation ſhe ſaid to him, "Take a *poon*, pig."* The ſaying became proverbial in the village; Suſan's little companions repeated it, and applied it upon many occaſions, whenever any one claimed more than his ſhare of any thing good. Barbara, who was then not Miſs Barbara, but plain Bab, and who played with all the poor children in the neighbourhood, was often reproved in her unjuſt methods of diviſion by Suſan's proverb. Suſan, as ſhe grew up, forgot the childiſh ſaying, but the remembrance of it rankled in Barbara's mind, and it was to this that

* This is a true anecdote.

ſhe ſuſpected Suſan had alluded, when ſhe recommended a ſpoon to her whilſt ſhe was ſwallowing the baſon of broth.

"La, Miſs," ſaid Barbara's maid, when ſhe found her miſtreſs in a paſſion upon her return from Suſan's, "I only wondered you did her the honour to ſet your foot within her doors. What need have you to trouble her for news about the Abbey folks, when your own papa has been there all morning, and is juſt come in, and can tell you every thing."

Barbara did not know, that her father meant to go to the Abbey that morning, for Attorney Caſe was myſterious even to his own family about his morning rides. He never choſe to be aſked where he was going, or where he had been, and this made his ſervants more than commonly inquiſitive to trace him.

Barbara, againſt whoſe apparent childiſhneſs, and real cunning, he was not ſufficiently upon his guard, had often the art of drawing him into converſation about his viſits.—She ran into her father's parlour, but ſhe knew, the moment ſhe ſaw his face, that it was no time to aſk queſtions; his pen was acroſs his mouth, and his brown wig puſhed oblique upon his contracted forehead—the wig was always puſhed crooked whenever he was in a brown, or rather a black ſtudy. Barbara, who did not, like Suſan, bear with her father's teſty humour from affection and gentleneſs of diſpoſition, but who always humoured him from artifice, tried all her ſkill to fathom his thoughts, and when ſhe found that *it* would not do, ſhe went to tell her maid ſo, and to complain that her father was ſo croſs, there was no bearing him.

It is true that Attorney Caſe was not in the happieſt mood poſſible, for he was by no means ſatisfied with his morning's work at the Abbey. Sir Arthur Somers, the *new man*, did not ſuit him, and he began to be rather apprehenſive, that he ſhould not ſuit Sir Arthur.—He had ſound reaſons for his doubts.

Sir Arthur Somers was an excellent lawyer, and a perfectly honeſt man.—This ſeemed to our Attorney a contradiction in terms;—in the courſe of his practice the caſe had not occurred, and he had no precedents ready to direct his proceedings.

Sir Arthur Somers was a man of wit and eloquence, yet of plain dealing and humanity. The Attorney could not perſuade himſelf to believe that the benevolence was any thing but enlightened

cunning, and the plain dealing he one minute dreaded as the maſter-piece of art, and the next deſpiſed as the characteriſtic of folly. In ſhort, he had not yet decided, whether he was an honeſt man or a knave.—He had ſettled accounts with him for his late agency, he had talked about ſundry matters of buſineſs, he conſtantly perceived that he could not impoſe upon Sir Arthur; but that he could know all the mazes of the law, and yet prefer the ſtraight road, was incomprehenſible.

Mr. Caſe paid him ſome compliments on his great legal abilities, his high reputation at the bar.

"I have left the bar," replied Sir Arthur, coolly.

The Attorney looked in unfeigned aſtoniſhment, when a man was actually making 3000l. per annum at the bar, that he ſhould leave it.

"I am come," ſaid he, "to enjoy the kind of domeſtic life which I prefer to all others—in the country, amongſt people whoſe happineſs I hope to increaſe."

At this ſpeech the Attorney changed his ground, flattering himſelf that he ſhould find his man averſe to buſineſs, and ignorant of country affairs. He talked of the value of land and of new leaſes.

Sir Arthur wiſhed to enlarge his domain, to make a ride round it.—A map of the domain was upon the table, Farmer Price's garden came exactly acroſs the new road for the ride. Sir Arthur looked diſappointed, and the keen Attorney ſeized the moment to inform him that "Price's whole land was at his diſpoſal."

"At my diſpoſal! how ſo?" cried Sir Arthur eagerly; it will not be out of leaſe I believe theſe ten years. I'll look into the rent-roll again, perhaps I am miſtaken."

"You are miſtaken, my good Sir, and you are not miſtaken," ſaid Mr. Caſe, with a ſhrewd ſmile; "the land will not be out of leaſe theſe ten years in one ſenſe, and in another it is out of leaſe at this time being. To come to the point at once, the leaſe is *ab origine* null and void. I have detected a capital flaw in the body of it; I pledge my credit upon it, Sir, it can't ſtand a ſingle term in law or equity."

The Attorney obſerved, that at theſe words Sir Arthur's eye was fixed with a look of earneſt attention. "Now I have him," ſaid the cunning tempter to himſelf.

"Neither in law nor equity?" repeated Sir Arthur, with apparent incredulity—"Are you ſure of that, Mr. Caſe?"

"Sure! As I told you before, Sir, I'd pledge my whole credit upon the thing—I'd ſtake my exiſtence."

"*That's ſomething*," ſaid Sir Arthur, as if he was pondering upon the matter.

The attorney went on with all the eagerneſs of a keen man, who ſees a chance at one ſtroke of winning a rich friend, and of ruining a poor enemy;—he explained with legal volubility, and technical amplification, the nature of the miſtake in Mr. Price's leaſe. "It was, Sir," ſaid he, "a leaſe for the life of Peter Price, Suſanna his wife, and to the ſurvivor or ſurvivors of them, or for the full time and term of twenty years, to be computed from the firſt day of May

then next enſuing.—Now, Sir, this you ſee is a leaſe in reverſion, which the late Sir Benjamin Somers had not, by his ſettlement, a right to make. This is a curious miſtake you ſee, Sir Arthur, and in filling up thoſe printed leaſes there's always a good chance of ſome flaw; I find it perpetually, but I never found a better than this in the whole courſe of my practice."

Sir Arthur ſtood in ſilence.

"My dear Sir," ſaid the attorney, taking him by the button, "you have no ſcruple of ſtirring in this buſineſs."

"A little," ſaid Sir Arthur.

"Why then that can be done away in a moment; your name ſhall not appear in it at all; you have nothing to do but to make over the leaſe to me—I make all ſafe to you with my bond.—Now being in poſſeſſion, I come forward in my own proper perſon. *Shall I proceed?*"

"No—you have ſaid enough," replied Sir Arthur.

"The caſe indeed lies in a nutſhell," ſaid the attorney, who had by this time worked himſelf up to ſuch a pitch of profeſſional enthuſiaſm, that, intent upon his viſion of a lawſuit, he totally forgot to obſerve the impreſſion his words made upon Sir Arthur.

"There's only one thing we have forgotten all this time," ſaid Sir Arthur.

"What can that be, Sir?"

"That we ſhall ruin this poor man."

Caſe was thunder-ſtruck at theſe words, or rather by the look which accompanied them. He recollected, that he had laid himſelf open, before he was ſure of Sir Arthur's *real* character. He ſoftened, and ſaid he ſhould have had certainly more *conſideration* in the caſe

of any but a litigious pig-headed fellow, as he knew Price to be.

"If he be litigious," ſaid Sir Arthur, "I ſhall certainly be glad to get him fairly out of the pariſh as ſoon as poſſible. When you go home, you will be ſo good, Sir, as to ſend me his leaſe, that I may ſatisfy myſelf, before we ſtir in this buſineſs."

The attorney, brightening up, prepared to take leave, but he could not perſuade himſelf to take his departure, without making one puſh at Sir Arthur about the agency.

"I will not trouble *you*, Sir Arthur, with this leaſe of Price's," ſaid he; "I'll leave it with your agent.—Whom ſhall I apply to?"

"*To myſelf*, Sir, if you pleaſe," replied Sir Arthur.

The courtiers of Lewis the XIVth

could not have looked more aſtounded than our attorney, when they received from their monarch a ſimilar anſwer. It was this unexpected reply of Sir Arthur's which had deranged the temper of Mr. Caſe, which had cauſed his wig to ſtand ſo crooked upon his forehead, and which rendered him impenetrably ſilent to his inquiſitive daughter Barbara.—After walking up and down his room, converſing with himſelf for ſome time, he concluded, that the agency muſt be given to ſomebody, when Sir Arthur ſhould go to attend his duty in Parliament; that the agency, even for the winter ſeaſon, was not a thing to be neglected, and that, if he managed well, he might yet ſecure it for himſelf.—He had often found, that ſmall timely preſents worked wonderfully upon his own mind, and he judged of others by himſelf. The

tenants had been in the reluctant but conſtant practice of making him continual petty offerings, and he reſolved to try the ſame courſe with Sir Arthur, whoſe reſolution to be his own agent he thought argued a cloſe, ſaving, avaricious diſpoſition.

He had heard the houſekeeper at the Abbey inquiring, as he paſſed through the ſervants, whether there was any lamb to be gotten? She ſaid that Sir Arthur was remarkably fond of lamb, and that ſhe wiſhed ſhe could get a quarter for him.

Immediately he ſallied into his kitchen, as ſoon as the idea ſtruck him, and aſked a ſhepherd, who was waiting there, whether he knew of a nice fat lamb to be had any where in the neighbourhood.

"I know of one," cried Barbara

"Suſan Price has a pet lamb, that's as fat as fat can be."

The attorney eagerly caught at theſe words, and ſpeedily deviſed a ſcheme for obtaining Suſan's lamb for nothing.

It would be ſomething ſtrange if an attorney of his talents and ſtanding was not an over-match for Simple Suſan. He prowled forth in ſearch of his prey; he found Suſan packing up her father's little wardrobe, and when ſhe looked up as ſhe knelt, he ſaw that ſhe had been in tears.

"How is your mother to-day, Suſan?"

"Worſe, Sir.—My father goes to-morrow."

"That's a pity."

"It can't be helped," ſaid Suſan, with a ſigh.

"It can't be helped—how do you know that?" ſaid he.

"Sir! *dear* Sir!" cried ſhe, looking up at him, and a ſudden ray of hope beamed in her ingenuous countenance.

"And if you could help it, Suſan?"

Suſan claſped her hands in ſilence, more expreſſive than words.

"You *can* help it, Suſan."

She ſtarted up in an ecſtacy.

"What would you give now to have your father at home for a whole week longer?"

"Any thing!—but I have nothing."

"Yes, but you have, a lamb," ſaid the hard-hearted attorney.

"My poor little lamb!" ſaid Suſan, "but what good can that do?"

"What good can any lamb do?—is not lamb good to eat? Why do you look ſo pale, girl? Are not ſheep killed every day, and don't you eat mutton? Is your lamb better than any body elſe's, think you?"

"I don't know, but I love it better."

"More fool you."

"It feeds out of my hand, it follows me about; I have always taken care of it, my mother gave it to me."

"Well, ſay no more about it then, if you love your lamb better than your father and your mother both, keep it, and good morning to you."

"Stay, oh ſtay!" cried Suſan, catching the ſkirt of his coat with an eager trembling hand;—"a whole week, did you ſay? My mother may get better in that time.—No, I do not love my lamb half ſo well." The ſtruggle of her mind ceaſed, and with a placid countenance and calm voice, "Take the lamb," ſaid ſhe.

"Where is it?" ſaid the attorney.

"Grazing in the meadow, by the river ſide."

"It muſt be brought up before night-fall for the butcher, remember."

"I ſhall not forget it," ſaid Suſan, ſteadily. But as ſoon as her perſecutor turned his back and quitted the houſe, ſhe ſat down, and hid her face in her hands. She was ſoon rouſed by the ſound of her mother's feeble voice, who was calling *Suſan* from the inner room where ſhe lay. Suſan went in, but did not undraw the curtain as ſhe ſtood beſide the bed.

"Are you there, love?—undraw the curtain, that I may ſee you, and tell me—I thought I heard ſome ſtrange voice juſt now talking to my child.—Something's amiſs, Suſan," ſaid her mother, raiſing herſelf as well as ſhe was able in the bed, to examine her daughter's countenance.

"Would you think it amiſs then,

my dear mother," ſaid Suſan, ſtooping to kiſs her, "would you think it amiſs, if my father was to ſtay with us a week longer?"

"Suſan! you don't ſay ſo?"

"He is indeed, a whole week;—but how burning hot your hand is ſtill."

"Are you ſure he will ſtay? How do you know? Who told you ſo?—Tell me all quick."

"Attorney Caſe told me ſo; he can get him a week's longer leave of abſence, and he has promiſed he will."

"God bleſs him for it for ever and ever!" ſaid the poor woman, joining her hands. "May the bleſſing of heaven be with him!"

Suſan cloſed the curtains and was ſilent—ſhe *could not ſay Amen.*

She was called out of the room at this moment, for a meſſenger was come

from the Abbey for the bread bills:—It was ſhe who always made out the bills, for though ſhe had not had a great number of leſſons from the writing-maſter, ſhe had taken ſo much pains to learn, that ſhe could write a very neat, legible hand, and ſhe found this very uſeful; ſhe was not, to be ſure, particularly inclined to draw out a long bill at this inſtant, but buſineſs muſt be done. She ſet to work, ruled her lines for the pounds, ſhillings, and pence, made out the bill for the Abbey, and diſpatched the impatient meſſenger; then ſhe reſolved to make out all the bills for the neighbours, who had many of them taken a few loaves and rolls of her baking. "I had better get all my buſineſs finiſhed," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, "before I go down to the meadow to take leave of my poor lamb."—This was ſooner ſaid than done;

for ſhe found that ſhe had a great number of bills to write, and the ſlate on which ſhe had entered the account was not immediately to be found, and when it was found, the figures were almoſt rubbed out; Barbara had ſat down upon it; Suſan pored over the number of loaves, and the names of the perſons who took them, and ſhe wrote, and caſt up ſums, and corrected and re-corrected them, till her head grew quite puzzled.

The table was covered with little ſquare bits of paper, on which ſhe had been writing bills over and over again, when her father came in with a bill in his hand.

"How's this, Suſan?" ſaid he.—"How can ye be ſo careleſs, child? What is your head running upon? Here look at the bill you were ſending up to the Abbey? I met the meſſenger, and

luckily aſked to ſee how much it was.—Look at it."

Suſan looked and bluſhed; it was written, "Sir Arthur Somers to John Price, debtor ſix dozen *lambs*, ſo much." She altered it, and returned it to her father; but he had taken up ſome of the papers which lay upon the table.—"What are all theſe, child?"

"Some of them are wrong, and I've written them out again," ſaid Suſan.

"Some of them! all of them, I think ſeem to be wrong, if I can read," ſaid her father, rather angrily; and he pointed out to her ſundry ſtrange miſtakes.

Her head indeed had been running upon her poor lamb. She corrected all the miſtakes with ſo much patience, and bore to be blamed with ſo much good humour, that her father at laſt ſaid,

that it was impoſſible ever to ſcold Suſan without being in the wrong at the laſt.

As ſoon as all was ſet right, he took the bills, and ſaid he would go round to the neighbours, and collect the money himſelf, for that he ſhould be very proud to have it to ſay to them, that it was all earned by his own little daughter.

Suſan reſolved to keep the pleaſure of telling him of his week's reprieve till he ſhould come home to ſup, as he had promiſed to do, in her mother's room.—She was not ſorry to hear him ſigh as he paſſed the knapſack, which ſhe had been packing up for his journey.

"How delighted he will be when he hears the good news!" ſaid ſhe to her-

ſelf; "but I know he will be a little ſorry too for my poor lamb."

As ſhe had now ſettled all her buſineſs, ſhe thought ſhe could have time to go down to the meadow by the river ſide to ſee her favourite; but juſt as ſhe had tied on her ſtraw hat the village clock ſtruck four, and this was the hour at which ſhe always went to fetch her little brothers home from a dame-ſchool near the village. She knew that they would be diſappointed, if ſhe was later than uſual, and ſhe did not like to keep them waiting, becauſe they were very patient good boys; ſo ſhe put off the viſit to her lamb, and went immediately for her brothers.

CHAPTER II.

" Ev'n in the ſpring, and play-time of the year,
" That calls th' unwonted villager abroad,
" With all her little ones, a ſportive train,
" To gather king-cups in the yellow mead,
" And prink their heads with daiſies."

COWPER.

THE dame-ſchool, which was about a mile from the hamlet, was not a ſplendid manſion, but it was reverenced as much by the young race of village-ſcholars, as if it had been the moſt ſtately edifice in the land; it was a low-roofed, long, thatched tenement, ſheltered by a few reverend oaks, under which many

generations of hopeful children had in their turn gambolled. The close-shaven green, which sloped down from the hatch-door of the school-room, was paled round with a rude paling, which, though decayed in some parts by time, was not in any place broken by violence. The place bespoke order and peace. The dame who governed here was well obeyed, because she was just, and well beloved, because she was ever glad to give well-earned praise, and pleasure to her little subjects.

Susan had once been under her gentle dominion, and had been deservedly her favourite scholar; the dame often cited her as the best example to the succeeding tribe of emulous youngsters.

Susan had scarcely opened the wicket, which separated the green before the school-room door from the lane, when

ſhe heard the merry voices of the children, and ſaw the little troop iſſuing from the hatchway, and ſpreading over the green.

"Oh, there's our Suſan!" cried her two little brothers, running, leaping, and bounding up to her, and many of the other roſy girls and boys crowded round her, to talk of their plays, for Suſan was eaſily intereſted in all that made others happy; but ſhe could not make them comprehend, that, if they all ſpoke at once, it was not poſſible that ſhe could hear what was ſaid. The voices were ſtill raiſed one above another, all eager to eſtabliſh ſome important obſervation about nine-pins, or marbles, or tops, or bows and arrows, when ſuddenly muſic was heard, unuſual muſic, and the crowd was ſilenced. The muſic ſeemed to be near the ſpot where

the children were ſtanding, and they looked round to ſee whence it could come.

Suſan pointed to the great oak tree, and they beheld, ſeated under its ſhade, an old man playing upon his harp.

The children all approached—at firſt timidly, for the ſounds were ſolemn, but as the harper heard their little footſteps coming towards him, he changed his hand, and played one of his moſt lively tunes. The circle cloſed, and preſſed nearer and nearer to him; ſome who were in the foremoſt row whiſpered to each other, "He is blind! What a pity!" and "He looks very poor, what a ragged coat he wears!" ſaid others. "He muſt be very old, for all his hair is white, and he muſt have travelled a great way, for his ſhoes are quite worn out," obſerved another.

All theſe remarks were made whilſt he was tuning his harp, for when he once more began to play not a word was uttered.

He ſeemed pleaſed by their ſimple exclamations of wonder and delight, and, eager to amuſe his young audience, he played now a gay and now a pathetic air, to ſuit their ſeveral humours.

Suſan's voice, which was ſoft and ſweet, expreſſive of gentleneſs and good-nature, caught his ear the moment ſhe ſpoke; he turned his face eagerly to the place where ſhe ſtood, and it was obſerved, that whenever ſhe ſaid, that ſhe liked any tune particularly, he played it over again.

"I am blind," ſaid the old man, "and cannot ſee your faces, but I know you all aſunder by your voices, and I can gueſs pretty well at all your humours and characters by your voices."

"Can you ſo indeed?" cried Suſan's little brother William, who had ſtationed himſelf between the old man's knees. "Then you heard *my* ſiſter Suſan ſpeak juſt now.—Can you tell us what ſort of a perſon ſhe is?"

"That I can, I think, without being a conjuror," ſaid the old man, lifting the boy up on his knee, "*your* ſiſter Suſan is good-natured."

The boy clapped his hands.

"And good tempered."

"*Right*," ſaid little William, with a louder clap of applauſe.

"And very fond of the little boy who ſits upon my knee."

"O right! right! quite right!" exclaimed the child, and "quite right" echoed on all ſides.

"But how came you to know ſo much, when you are blind?" ſaid Wil-

liam, examining the old man attentively.

"Huſh," ſaid John, who was a year older than his brother, and very ſage, "you ſhould not put him in mind of his being blind."

"Though I am blind," ſaid the harper, "I can hear, you know, and I heard from your ſiſter herſelf all that I told you of her, that ſhe was good-tempered and good-natured, and fond of you."

"Oh, that's wrong—you did not hear all that from herſelf, I'm ſure," ſaid John, "for nobody ever hears her praiſing herſelf."

"Did not I hear her tell you, when you firſt came round me, that ſhe was in a great hurry to go home, but that ſhe would ſtay a little while, ſince you wiſhed it ſo much—Was not that good-

natured? and when you ſaid you did not like the tune ſhe liked beſt, ſhe was not angry with you, but ſaid 'then, play William's firſt, if you pleaſe.'—Was not that good tempered?"

"Oh," interrupted William, "it's all true; but how did you find out that ſhe was fond of me?"

"That is ſuch a difficult queſtion," ſaid the harper, "that I muſt take time to conſider."—He tuned his harp as he pondered, or ſeemed to ponder; and at this inſtant two boys, who had been ſearching for birds neſts in the hedges, and who had heard the ſound of the harp, came bluſtering up, and puſhing their way through the circle, one of them exclaimed,

"What's going on here?—Who are you, my old fellow?—A blind harper;

well, play us a tune, if you can play ever a good one—play me—let's ſee, what ſhall he play, Bob?" added he, turning to his companion. "Bumper Squire Jones."

The old man, though he did not ſeem quite pleaſed with the peremptory manner of the requeſt, played, as he was deſired, "Bumper Squire Jones;" and ſeveral other tunes were afterwards beſpoke by the ſame rough and tyrannical voice.

The little children ſhrunk back in timid ſilence, and eyed the great brutal boy with diſlike.

This boy was the ſon of attorney Caſe, and as his father had neglected to correct his temper when he was a child, as he grew up it became inſufferable; all who were younger and weaker than him-

ſelf, dreaded his approach, and deteſted him as a tyrant.

When the old harper was ſo tired, that he could play no more, a lad, who uſually carried his harp for him, and who was within call, came up, and held his maſter's hat to the company, ſaying, "Will you be pleaſed to remember us." The children readily produced their halfpence, and thought their wealth well beſtowed upon this poor good-natured man, who had taken ſo much pains to entertain them, better even than upon the gingerbread-woman, whoſe ſtall they loved to frequent. The hat was held ſome time to the attorney's ſon before he choſe to ſee it; at laſt he put his hand ſurlily into his waiſtcoat-pocket, and pulled out a ſhilling; there were ſixpenny worth of halfpence in the hat, "I'll take theſe halfpence," aid he, "and here's a ſhilling for you."

"God bleſs you, Sir," ſaid the lad, but as he took the ſhilling, which the young gentleman had ſlily put *into the blind man's hand*, he ſaw that it was not worth one farthing.

"I am afraid it is not good, Sir," ſaid the lad, whoſe buſineſs it was to examine the money for his maſter.

"I am afraid then you'll get no other," ſaid young Caſe, with an inſulting laugh.

"It never will do, Sir," perſiſted the lad, "look at it yourſelf, the edges are all yellow; you can ſee the copper through it quite plain; Sir, nobody will take it from us."

"That's your affair," ſaid the brutal boy, puſhing away his hand; "you may paſs it, you know, as well as I do, if you look ſharp—you have taken

it from me, and I ſhan't take it back again, I promiſe you."

A whiſper of "that's very unjuſt" was heard.—The little aſſembly, though under evident conſtraint, could no longer ſuppreſs their indignation.

"Who ſays it's unjuſt?" cried the tyrant ſternly, looking down upon his judges.

Suſan's little brothers had held her gown faſt to prevent her from moving at the beginning of this conteſt, and ſhe was now ſo much intereſted to ſee the end of it, that ſhe ſtood ſtill, without making any reſiſtance.

"Is any one here amongſt yourſelves a judge of ſilver," ſaid the old man.

"Yes, here's the butcher's boy," ſaid the attorney's ſon, "ſhew it to him."

He was a ſickly looking boy, and of a remarkably peaceable diſpoſition.

Young Caſe fancied that he would be afraid to give judgment againſt him; however, after ſome moments heſitation, and after turning the ſhilling round ſeveral times, he pronounced, " that, as far as his judgment went, but he did not pretend to be downright *certain ſure* of it, the ſhilling was not over and above good." Then turning to Suſan, to ſcreen himſelf from manifeſt danger, for the Attorney's ſon looked upon him with a vengeful mien, " But here's Suſan here, who underſtands ſilver a great deal better than I do, ſhe takes a power of it for bread you know."

" I'll leave it to her," ſaid the old harper; " if ſhe ſays the ſhilling is good, keep it, Jack."

The ſhilling was handed to Suſan, who, though ſhe had with becoming modeſty forborn all interference, did not

heſitate, when ſhe was called upon, to ſpeak the truth; "I think that this ſhilling is a bad one," ſaid ſhe, and the gentle, but firm tone in which ſhe pronounced the words, for a moment awed and ſilenced the angry and brutal boy.

"There's another then," cried he, "I have ſixpences and ſhillings too in plenty, thank my ſtars."

Suſan now walked away with her two little brothers, and all the other children ſeparated to go to their ſeveral homes.

The old harper called to Suſan, and begged, that, if ſhe was going towards the village, ſhe would be ſo kind as to ſhew him the way.

His lad took up his harp, and little William took the old man by the hand, "I'll lead him, I can lead him," ſaid he; and John ran on before them, to gather king-cups in the meadow.

There was a ſmall rivulet, which they had to croſs, and as the plank which ſerved for a bridge over it was rather narrow, Suſan was afraid to truſt the old blind man to his little conductor; ſhe therefore went on the tottering plank firſt herſelf, and then led the old harper carefully over; they were now come to a gate, which opened upon the high road to the village.

"There is the high road ſtraight before you," ſaid Suſan to the lad, who was carrying his maſter's harp, "you can't miſs it; now I muſt bid you a good evening, for I'm in a great hurry to get home, and muſt go the ſhort way acroſs the fields here, which would not be ſo pleaſant for you, becauſe of the ſtiles.—Good bye."

The old harper thanked her, and went along the high road, whilſt ſhe

and her brothers tripped on as faſt as they could by the ſhort way acroſs the fields.

"Miſs Somers, I am afraid, will be waiting for us," ſaid Suſan; "you know ſhe ſaid ſhe would call at ſix, and by the length of our ſhadows I'm ſure it is late."

When they came to their own cottage door, they heard many voices, and they ſaw, when they entered, ſeveral ladies ſtanding in the kitchen.

"Come in, Suſan, we thought you had quite forſaken us," ſaid Miſs Somers to Suſan, who advanced timidly. "I fancy you forgot, that we promiſed to pay you a viſit this evening; but you need not bluſh ſo much about the matter, there is no great harm done, we have only been here about five minutes, and we have been well employed in admiring

your neat garden, and your orderly ſhelves. Is it you, Suſan, who keep theſe things in ſuch nice order?" continued Miſs Somers, looking round the kitchen.

Before Suſan could reply, little William puſhed forward, and anſwered, "Yes, Ma'am, it is *my* ſiſter Suſan that keeps every thing neat, and ſhe always comes to ſchool for us too, which was what cauſed her to be ſo late." "Becauſe as how," continued John, "ſhe was loth to refuſe us the hearing a blind man play on the harp—it was we kept her, and we hopes, Ma'am, as you *are*—as you *ſeem* ſo good, you won't take it amiſs."

Miſs Somers and her ſiſter ſmiled at the affectionate ſimplicity, with which Suſan's little brothers undertook her defence, and they were, from this ſlight

circumſtance, diſpoſed to think yet more favourably of a family, which ſeemed ſo well united.

They took Suſan along with them through the village; many came to their doors, and far from envying, all ſecretly wiſhed Suſan well as ſhe paſſed.

"I fancy we ſhall find what we want here," ſaid Miſs Somers, ſtopping before a ſhop, where unfolded ſheets of pins and glaſs buttons gliſtened in the window, and where rolls of many coloured ribbons appeared ranged in tempting order. She went in, and was rejoiced to ſee the ſhelves at the back of the counter well furniſhed with gloſſy tiers of ſtuffs, and gay, neat, printed linens and callicoes.

"Now, Suſan, chooſe yourſelf a gown," ſaid Miſs Somers; "you ſet an example of induſtry and good conduct,

of which we wiſh to take public notice, for the benefit of others."

The ſhopkeeper, who was father to Suſan's friend Roſe, looked much ſatisfied by this ſpeech, and as if a compliment had been paid to himſelf, bowed low to Miſs Somers, and then with alertneſs, which a London linen-draper might have admired, produced piece after piece of his beſt goods to his young cuſtomer—unrolled, unfolded, held the bright ſtuffs and callendered callicoes in various lights. Now ſtretched his arm to the higheſt ſhelves, and brought down in a trice what ſeemed to be beyond the reach of any but a giant's arm; now dived into ſome hidden receſs beneath the counter, and brought to light freſh beauties, and freſh temptations.

Suſan looked on with more indiffe-

rence than moſt of the ſpectators.—She was thinking much of her lamb, and more of her father.

Miſs Somers had put a bright guinea into her hand, and had bid her pay for her own gown; but Suſan, as ſhe looked at the guinea, thought it was a great deal of money to lay out upon herſelf, and ſhe wiſhed, but did not know how to aſk, that ſhe might keep it for a better purpoſe.

Some people are wholly inattentive to the leſſer feelings, and incapable of reading the countenances of thoſe on whom they beſtow their bounty.—Miſs Somers and her ſiſter were not of this roughly charitable claſs.

"She does not like any of theſe things," whiſpered Miſs Somers to her ſiſter.

Her ſiſter obſerved, that Suſan looked

as if her thoughts were far diſtant from gowns.

"If you don't fancy any of theſe things," ſaid the civil ſhopkeeper to Suſan, "we ſhall have a new aſſortment of callicoes for the ſpring ſeaſon ſoon from town."

"Oh," interrupted Suſan, with a ſmile and a bluſh, "theſe are all pretty, and too good for me, but——"

"*But* what, Suſan?" ſaid Miſs Somers. "Tell us what is paſſing in your little mind."

Suſan heſitated.

"Well then, we will not preſs you; you are ſcarcely acquainted with us yet, when you are you will not be afraid, I hope, to ſpeak your mind.—Put this ſhining yellow counter," continued ſhe, pointing to the guinea, "in your pocket, and make what uſe of it you pleaſe,

From what we know, and from what we have heard of you, we are perſuaded that you will make a good uſe of it."

"I think, Madam," ſaid the maſter of the ſhop, with a ſhrewd good-natured look, "I could give a pretty good gueſs myſelf what will become of that guinea—but I ſay nothing."

"No, that is right," ſaid Miſs Somers, "we leave Suſan entirely at liberty, and now we will not detain her any longer. Good night Suſan, we ſhall ſoon come again to your neat cottage."

Suſan courteſyed with an expreſſive look of gratitude, and with a modeſt frankneſs in her countenance, which ſeemed to ſay, "I would tell you and welcome what I want to do with the guinea—but I am not uſed to ſpeak before ſo many people; when you come

to our cottage again you ſhall know all."

When Suſan had departed, Miſs Somers turned to the obliging ſhopkeeper, who was folding up all the things he had opened, "You have had a great deal of trouble with us, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "and ſince Suſan will not chooſe a gown for herſelf, I muſt."—She ſelected the prettieſt, and whilſt the man was rolling it in paper, ſhe aſked him ſeveral queſtions about Suſan and her family, which he was delighted to anſwer, becauſe he had now an opportunity of ſaying as much as he wiſhed in her praiſe.

"No later back, Ma'am, than laſt May morning," ſaid he, "as my daughter Roſe was telling us, Suſan did a turn, in her quiet way, by her mother, that would not diſpleaſe you if you were to hear it. She was to have been Queen

of the May, ladies, which, in our little village, amongſt the younger tribe, is a thing, ladies, that is thought of a good deal—but Suſan's mother was ill, and Suſan, after ſitting up with her all night, would not leave her in the morning, even when they brought the crown to her.—She put the crown upon my daughter Roſe's head with her own hands, and to be ſure Roſe loves her as well as if ſhe was her own ſiſter; but I don't ſpeak from partiality, for I am no relation whatever to the Prices, only a well-wiſher, as every one, I believe, who knows them, is.—I'll ſend the parcel up to the Abbey, ſhall I Ma'am?"

"If you pleaſe," ſaid Miſs Somers, "and let us know as ſoon as you receive your new things from town. You will, I hope, find us good cuſtomers, and well-wiſhers," added ſhe with a

ſmile, "for thoſe who wiſh well to their neighbours ſurely deſerve to have well-wiſhers themſelves."

A few words may encourage the benevolent paſſions, and may diſpoſe people to live in peace and happineſs;—a few words may ſet them at variance, and may lead to miſery and lawſuits.—Attorney Caſe and Miſs Somers were both equally convinced of this, and their practice was uniformly conſiſtent with their principles.

But now to return to Suſan.—She put the bright guinea carefully into the glove with the twelve ſhillings, which ſhe had received from her companions on May-day. Beſides this treaſure, ſhe calculated, that the amount of the bills for bread could not be leſs than eight or nine and thirty ſhillings, and as her father was now ſure of a week's reprieve,

ſhe had great hopes, that, by ſome means or other, it would be poſſible to make up the whole ſum neceſſary to pay for a ſubſtitute. "If that could but be done," ſaid ſhe to herſelf, "how happy would my mother be!—She would be quite ſtout again, for ſhe certainly is a great deal better ſince morning, ſince I told her that father would ſtay a week longer.—Ah! but ſhe would not have bleſſed attorney Caſe though, if ſhe had known about my poor Daiſy."

Sufan took the path that led to the meadow by the water-ſide, reſolved to go by herſelf, and take leave of her innocent favourite. But ſhe did not paſs by unperceived; her little brothers were watching for her return, and as ſoon as they ſaw her, they ran after her, and overtook her as ſhe reached the meadow.

"What did that good lady want with you," cried William; but looking up in his ſiſter's face, he ſaw tears in her eyes, and he was ſilent, and walked on quietly.

Suſan ſaw her lamb by the water-ſide.

"Who are thoſe two men?" ſaid William. "What are they going to do with *Daiſy?*"

The two men were attorney Caſe and the butcher.—The butcher was feeling whether the lamb was fat.

Suſan ſat down upon the bank in ſilent ſorrow;—her little brothers ran up to the butcher, and demanded whether he was going to *do any harm* to the lamb.

The butcher did not anſwer, but the attorney replied, "It is not your ſiſter's lamb any longer, it's mine—mine to all intents and p[illegible]poſes."

"Your's!" cried the children with terror; "and will you kill it?"

"That's the butcher's buſineſs."

The little boys now burſt into piercing lamentations; they puſhed away the butcher's hand, they threw their arms round the neck of the lamb, they kiſſed its forehead—it bleated.

"It will not bleat to-morrow!" ſaid William, and he wept bitterly.

The butcher looked aſide, and haſtily rubbed his eyes with the corner of his blue apron.

The attorney ſtood unmoved; he pulled up the head of the lamb, which had juſt ſtooped to crop a mouthful of clover.—"I have no time to waſte," ſaid he; "butcher, you'll account with me. If it's fat—the ſooner the better. I've no more to ſay." And he walked off, deaf to the prayers of the poor children.

As ſoon as the attorney was out of ſight, Suſan roſe from the bank where ſhe was ſeated, came up to her lamb, and ſtooped to gather ſome of the freſh dewy trefoil, to let it eat out of her hand for the laſt time.—Poor Daiſy licked her well-known hand.

"Now, let us go," ſaid Suſan.

"I'll wait as long as you pleaſe," ſaid the butcher.

Suſan thanked him, but walked away quickly, without looking again at her lamb.

Her little brothers begged the man to ſtay a few minutes, for they had gathered a handful of blue ſpeedwell and yellow crowsfoot, and they were decking the poor animal.

As it followed the boys through the village, the children collected as they paſſed, and the butcher's own ſon was

was among the number. Suſan's ſteadineſs about the bad ſhilling was full in this boy's memory, it had ſaved him a beating; he went directly to his father to beg the life of Suſan's lamb.

"I was thinking about it, boy, myſelf," ſaid the butcher; "it's a ſin to kill a *pet lamb*, I'm thinking—any way it's what I'm not uſed to, and don't fancy doing, and I'll go and ſay as much to attorney Caſe—but he's a hard man; there's but one way to deal with him, and that's the way I muſt take, though ſo be I ſhall be the loſer thereby, but we'll ſay nothing to the boys, for fear it might be the thing would not take, and then it would be worſe again to poor Suſan, who is a good girl, and always was, as well ſhe may, being of a good breed, and well reared from the firſt."

"Come, lads, don't keep a crowd

and a ſcandal about my door," continued he, aloud, to the children; "turn the lamb in here, John, in the paddock, for to-night, and go your ways home."

The crowd diſperſed, but murmured, and the butcher went to the attorney. "Seeing that all you want is a good, fat, tender lamb, for a preſent for Sir Arthur, as you told me," ſaid the butcher, "I could let you have what's as good and better for your purpoſe."

"Better—if it's better I'm ready to hear reaſon."

The butcher had choice, tender lamb, he ſaid, fit to eat the next day, and as Mr. Caſe was impatient to make his offering to Sir Arthur, he accepted the butcher's propoſal, though with ſuch ſeeming reluctance, that he actually ſqueezed out of him, before he would complete the bargain, a bribe of a fine ſweetbread.

In the mean time Suſan's brothers ran home to tell her, that her lamb was put into the paddock for the night; this was all they knew, and even this was ſome comfort to her.—Roſe, her good friend was with her, and ſhe had before her the pleaſure of telling her father of his week's reprieve—her mother was better, and even ſaid ſhe was determined to ſit up to ſupper in her wicker arm chair.

Suſan was getting things ready for ſupper, when little William, who was ſtanding at the houſe-door, watching in the duſk for his father's return, ſuddenly exclaimed, "Suſan! if here is not our old man!"

"Yes," ſaid the old harper, "I have found my way to you; the neighbours were kind enough to ſhew me whereabouts you lived, for though I didn't

know your name, they gueſſed who I meant by what I ſaid of you all."

Suſan came to the door, and the old man was delighted to hear her ſpeak again.

"If it would not be too bold," ſaid he, "I'm a ſtranger in this part of the country, and come from afar off; my boy has got a bed for himſelf here in the village, but I have no place—could you be ſo charitable to give an old blind man a night's lodging."

Suſan ſaid ſhe would ſtep and aſk her mother, and ſhe ſoon returned with an anſwer, that he was heartily welcome, if he could ſleep upon the children's bed, which was but ſmall.

The old man thankfully entered the hoſpitable cottage—he ſtruck his head againſt the low roof as he ſtepped over the door ſill.

"Many roofs that are twice as high are not half ſo good," ſaid he.

Of this he had juſt had experience at the houſe of attorney Caſe, where he had aſked, but had been roughly refuſed all aſſiſtance by Miſs Barbara, who was, according to her uſual cuſtom, ſtanding ſtaring at the hall door.

The old man's harp was ſet down in farmer Price's kitchen, and he promiſed to play a tune for the boys before they went to bed; their mother giving them leave to ſit up to ſupper with their father.

He came home with a ſorrowful countenance, but how ſoon did it brighten, when Suſan, with a ſmile, ſaid to him, "Father, we've good news for you! good news for us all!—You have a whole week longer to ſtay with us, and perhaps," continued ſhe, putting her little

purſe into his hands, "perhaps with what's here, and the bread bills, and what may ſome how be got together before a week's at an end, we may make up the nine guineas for the ſubſtitute, as they call him; who knows, deareſt mother, but we may keep him with us for ever!"—As ſhe ſpoke ſhe threw her arms round her father, who preſſed her to his boſom without ſpeaking, for his heart was full. He was ſome little time, before he could perfectly believe, that what he heard was true, but the revived ſmiles of his wife, the noiſy joy of his little boys, and the ſatisfaction that ſhone in Suſan's countenance, convinced him that he was not in a dream.

As they ſat down to ſupper, the old harper was made welcome to his ſhare of the cheerful, though frugal meal.

Suſan's father, as ſoon as ſupper was

finiſhed, even before he would let the harper play a tune for his boys, opened the little purſe, which Suſan had given to him; he was ſurpriſed at the ſight of the twelve ſhillings, and ſtill more, when he came to the bottom of the purſe, to ſee the bright golden guinea.

"How did you come by all this money, Suſan?" ſaid he.

"Honeſtly and handſomely, that I'm ſure of beforehand," ſaid her proud mother, "but how I can't make out, except by the baking.—Hey, Suſan, is this your firſt baking?"

"Oh, no, no," ſaid her father, "I have her firſt baking ſnug here, beſides, in my pocket. I kept it for a ſurpriſe to do your mother's heart good, Suſan. Here's twenty-nine ſhillings, and the Abbey bill, which is not paid yet, comes to ten more,—What think you of this, wife?

have we not a right to be proud of our Suſan?" "Why," continued he, turning to the harper, "I aſk your pardon for ſpeaking out ſo free before ſtrangers in praiſe of my own, which I know is not mannerly; but the truth is the fitteſt thing to be ſpoken, as I think, at all times, therefore here's your good health, Suſan;—why, by and by ſhe'll be worth her weight in gold—in ſilver at leaſt.—But tell us, child, how came you by all this riches? and how comes it that I don't go to-morrow?—All this happy news makes me ſo gay in myſelf, I'm afraid I ſhall hardly underſtand it rightly.—But ſpeak on, child—firſt bringing us a bottle of the good mead you made laſt year from your own honey."

Suſan did not much like to tell the hiſtory of her Guinea hen—of the gown—and of her poor lamb—part of this

would ſeem as if ſhe was vaunting of her own generoſity, and part of it ſhe did not like to recollect. But her mother preſſed to know the whole, and ſhe related it as ſimply as ſhe could. When ſhe came to the ſtory of her lamb, her voice faultered, and every body preſent was touched.—The old harper ſighed once, and cleared his throat ſeveral times—he then aſked for his harp, and, after tuning it for a conſiderable time, he recollected, for he had often fits of abſence, that he ſent for it to play the tune he had promiſed to the boys.

This harper came from a great diſtance, from the mountains of Wales, to contend with ſeveral other competitors for a prize, which had been advertiſed by a muſical ſociety about a year before this time. There was to be a ſplendid ball given upon the occaſion at Shrew-

bury, which was about five miles from our village. The prize was ten guineas for the beſt performer on the harp, and the prize was now to be decided in a few days.

All this intelligence Barbara had long ſince gained from her maid, who often went to viſit in the town of Shrewſbury, and ſhe had long had her imagination inflamed with the idea of this ſplendid muſic meeting and ball. Often had ſhe ſighed to be there, and often had ſhe revolved in her mind ſchemes for introducing herſelf to ſome *genteel* neighbours, who might take her to the ball *in their carriage*.—How rejoiced, how triumphant was ſhe, when this very evening, juſt about the time when the butcher was bargaining with her father about Suſan's lamb, a *livery* ſervant from the Abbey rapped at the door,

and left a card of invitation for Mr. and Miſs Barbara Caſe.

"There," cried Bab, "*I* and *papa* are to dine and drink tea at the Abbey to-morrow.—Who knows?—I dare ſay, when they ſee that I'm not a vulgar-looking perſon, and all that—and if I go cunningly to work with Miſs Somers—as I ſhall—to be ſure, I dare ſay, ſhe'll take me to the ball with her."

"To be ſure," ſaid the maid, "it's the leaſt one may expect from a lady that *demeans* herſelf to viſit Suſan Price, and goes about a ſhopping for her; the leaſt ſhe can do for you, is to take you in her carriage, *which* coſts nothing, but is juſt a common civility to a ball."

"Then pray, Betty," continued Miſs Barbara, "don't forget to-morrow, the

firſt thing you do, to ſend off to Shrewſbury for my new bonnet—I muſt have it *to dine in*, at the Abbey, or the ladies will think nothing of me—and, Betty, remember the mantua-maker too. I muſt ſee and coax papa, to buy me a new gown againſt the ball. I can ſee, you know, ſomething of the faſhions to-morrow at the Abbey, I ſhall *look the ladies well over*, I promiſe you.—And, Betty, I have thought of the moſt charming preſent for Miſs Somers: as papa ſays, it's good never to go empty-handed to a great houſe, I'll make Miſs Somers, who is fond, as her maid told you, of ſuch things—I'll make Miſs Somers a preſent of that Guinea hen of Suſan's;—it's of no uſe to me, ſo do you carry it up early in the morning to the Abbey, with my compliments.—That's the thing."

In full confidence that her preſent, and her bonnet, would operate effectually in her favour, Miſs Barbara paid her firſt viſit at the Abbey. She expected to ſee wonders, ſhe was dreſſed in all the finery, which ſhe had heard from her maid, who had heard from the 'prentice of a Shrewſbury milliner, was *the thing* in London; and ſhe was much ſurpriſed and diſappointed, when ſhe was ſhewn into the room where the Miſs Somerſes, and the ladies at the Abbey were ſitting, to ſee that they did not, in any one part of their dreſs, agree with the picture her imagination had formed of faſhionable ladies. She was embarraſſed when ſhe ſaw books, and work, and drawings upon the table, and ſhe began to think, that ſome affront was meant to her, becauſe *the company* did not ſit with their hands before them.

When Miſs Somers endeavoured to find out converſation that would intereſt her, and ſpoke of walks, and flowers, and gardening, of which ſhe was herſelf fond, Miſs Barbara ſtill thought herſelf under-valued, and ſoon contrived to expoſe her ignorance moſt completely, by talking of things which ſhe did not underſtand.

Thoſe who never attempt to appear what they are not—thoſe who do not in their manners pretend to any thing unſuited to their habits and ſituation in life, never are in danger of being laughed at by ſenſible, well-bred people of any rank; but affectation is the conſtant and juſt object of ridicule.

Miſs Barbara Caſe, with her miſtaken airs of gentility, aiming to be thought a woman, and a fine lady, whilſt ſhe was in reality a child, and a vulgar attorney's

daughter, rendered herſelf ſo thoroughly ridiculous, that the good-natured, yet diſcerning ſpectators, were painfully divided between their ſenſe of comic abſurdity, and a feeling of ſhame for one who could feel nothing for herſelf.

One by one the ladies dropped off—Miſs Somers went out of the room for a few minutes to alter her dreſs, as it was the cuſtom of the family, before dinner. She left a port-folio of pretty drawings and good prints, for Miſs Barbara's amuſement; but Miſs Barbara's thoughts were ſo intent upon the harper's ball, that ſhe could not be entertained with ſuch *trifles*.

How unhappy are thoſe, who ſpend their time in expectation! they can never enjoy the preſent moment.

Whilſt Barbara was contriving means of intereſting Miſs Somers in her favour,

ſhe recollected, with ſurpriſe, that not one word had yet been ſaid of her preſent of the Guinea hen.

Mrs. Betty, in the hurry of her dreſſing her young lady in the morning, had forgotten it, but it came juſt whilſt Miſs Somers was dreſſing, and the houſekeeper came into her miſtreſs's room to announce its arrival.

"Ma'am," ſaid ſhe, "here's a beautiful Guinea hen juſt come, *with* Miſs Barbara Caſe's compliments to you."

Miſs Somers knew, by the tone in which the houſekeeper delivered this meſſage, that there was ſomething in the buſineſs, which did not perfectly pleaſe her. She made no anſwer, in expectation that the houſekeeper, who was a woman of a very open temper, would explain her cauſe of diſſatisfaction.—In this ſhe was not miſtaken, the houſe-

keeper came close up to the dressing-table, and continued, "I never like to speak till I'm sure, ma'am, and I'm not quite sure, to say certain, in this case, ma'am, but still I think it right to tell you, which can't wrong any body, what came across my mind about this same Guinea hen, ma'am, and you can inquire into it, and do as you please afterwards, ma'am. Sometime ago we had fine Guinea fowls of our own, and I made bold, not thinking, to be sure, that all our own would die away from us, as they have done, to give a fine couple last Christmas to Susan Price, and very fond and pleased she was at the time, and I'm sure would never have parted with the hen with her good-will; but if my eyes don't strangely mistake, this hen, that comes from Miss Barbara, is the self-same iden-

tical Guinea hen that I gave to Suſan. And how Miſs Bab came by it is the thing that puzzles me. If my boy Philip was at home, may be, as he's often at Mrs. Price's (which I don't diſapprove), he might know the hiſtory of the Guinea hen. I expect him home this night, and, if you have no objection, I will ſift the affair.

"The ſhorteſt way, I ſhould think," ſaid Henrietta, "would be to aſk Miſs Caſe herſelf about it, which I will do this evening."

"If you pleaſe, ma'am," ſaid the houſekeeper, coldly, for ſhe knew that Miſs Barbara was not famous in the village for ſpeaking truth.

Dinner was now ſerved.—Attorney Caſe expected to ſmell mint ſauce, and, as the covers were taken from off the diſhes, looked around for lamb—but

no lamb appeared.—He had a dexterous knack of twiſting the converſation to his point.

Sir Arthur was ſpeaking, when they ſat down to dinner, of a new carving-knife, which he lately had had made for his ſiſter; the attorney immediately went from carving-knives to poultry, thence to butcher's meat, ſome joints he obſerved were much more difficult to carve than others; he never ſaw a man carve better than the gentleman oppoſite him, who was the curate of the pariſh. "But, Sir," ſaid the vulgar attorney, "I muſt make bold to differ with you in one point, and I'll appeal to Sir Arthur." "Sir Arthur, pray, may I aſk, when you carve a fore-quarter of lamb, do you, when you raiſe the ſhoulder, throw in ſalt or not?"

This well-prepared queſtion was not

loſt upon Sir Arthur; the attorney was thanked for his intended preſent, but mortified and ſurpriſed, to hear Sir Arthur ſay, that it was a conſtant rule of his never to accept of any preſents from his neighbours. "If we were to accept a lamb from a rich neighbour on my eſtate," ſaid he, "I am afraid we ſhould mortify many of our poor tenants, who can have little to offer, though, perhaps, they may bear us thorough good-will notwithſtanding."

"After the ladies left the dining-room, as they were walking up and down the large hall, Miſs Barbara had a fair opportunity of imitating her keen father's method of converſing. One of the ladies obſerved, that this hall would be a charming place for muſic—Bab brought in harps, and harpers, and the harpers' ball, in a breath.—"I know

ſo much about it, about the ball I mean," ſaid ſhe, "becauſe a lady in Shrewſbury, a friend of papa's, offered to take me with her, but papa did not like to give her the trouble of ſending ſo far for me, though ſhe has a coach of her own."

Barbara fixed her eyes upon Miſs Somers, as ſhe ſpoke, but ſhe could not read her countenance as diſtinctly as ſhe wiſhed, becauſe Miſs Somers was at this moment letting down the veil of her hat.

"Shall we walk out before tea?" ſaid ſhe to her companions. "I have a pretty Guinea hen to ſhew you."

Barbara, ſecretly drawing propitious omens from the Guinea hen, followed with a confidential ſtep.

The pheaſantry was well filled with pheaſants, peacocks, &c. and Suſan's

pretty little Guinea hen appeared well, even in this high company—it was much admired. Barbara was in glory—but her glory was of ſhort duration. Juſt as Miſs Somers was going to inquire into the Guinea hen's hiſtory, Philip came up, to aſk permiſſion to have a bit of ſycamore, to turn a nutmeg-box for his mother.

Philip was an ingenious lad, and a good turner for his age; Sir Arthur had put by a bit of ſycamore on purpoſe for him, and Miſs Somers told him where it was to be found. He thanked her, but in the midſt of his bow of thanks his eye was ſtruck by the ſight of the Guinea hen, and he involuntarily exclaimed, "Suſan's Guinea hen, I declare!"

"No, it's not Suſan's Guinea hen," ſaid Miſs Barbara, colouring furiouſly.

" It is mine, and I've made a preſent of it to Miſs Somers."

At the ſound of Bab's voice Philip turned—ſaw her—and indignation, unreſtrained by the preſence of all the amazed ſpectators, flaſhed in his countenance.

" What is the matter, Philip?" ſaid Miſs Somers, in a pacifying tone;—but Philip was not inclined to be pacified.

" Why, ma'am," ſaid he, " may I ſpeak out?" and, without waiting for permiſſion, he ſpoke out, and gave a full, true, and warm account of Roſe's embaſſy, and of Miſs Barbara's cruel and avaricious proceedings.

Barbara denied, prevaricated, ſtammered, and at laſt was overcome with confuſion, for which even the moſt indulgent ſpectators could ſcarcely pity her.

Miſs Somers, however, mindful of what was due to her gueſt, was anxious to diſpatch Philip for his piece of ſycamore.

Bab recovered herſelf as ſoon as he was out of ſight; but ſhe further expoſed herſelf by exclaiming, "I'm ſure I wiſh this pitiful Guinea hen had never come into my poſſeſſion. I wiſh Suſan had kept it at home, as ſhe ſhould have done!"

"Perhaps ſhe will be more careful now, that ſhe has received ſo ſtrong a leſſon," ſaid Miſs Somers. "Shall we try her?" continued ſhe; "Philip will, I dare ſay, take the Guinea hen back to Suſan, if we deſire it."

"If you pleaſe, ma'am," ſaid Barbara, ſullenly; "I have nothing more to do with it."

So the Guinea hen was delivered to

Philip, who ſet off joyfully with his prize, and was ſoon in ſight of farmer Price's cottage.

He ſtopped when he came to the door; he recollected Roſe, and her generous friendſhip for Suſan; he was determined, that ſhe ſhould have the pleaſure of reſtoring the Guinea hen; he ran into the village, all the children who had given up their little purſe on May-day were aſſembled on the play-green; they were delighted to ſee the Guinea hen once more—Philip took his pipe and tabor, and they marched in innocent triumph towards the white waſhed cottage.

"Let me come with you—let me come with you," ſaid the butcher's boy to Philip. "Stop one minute! my father has ſomething to ſay to you."

He darted into his father's houſe. The little proceſſion ſtopped, and in a few

minutes, the bleating of a lamb was heard. Through a back paſſage, which led into the paddock behind the houſe, they ſaw the butcher leading a lamb.

"It is Daiſy!" exclaimed Roſe.—"It's Daiſy!" repeated all her companions. "Suſan's lamb! Suſan's lamb!" and there was an univerſal ſhout of joy.

"Well, for my part," ſaid the good butcher, as ſoon as he could be heard, "For my part, I would not be ſo cruel as attorney Caſe for the whole world.—Theſe poor brute beaſts don't know aforehand what's going to happen to them; and as for dying, it's what we muſt all do ſome time or another; but to keep wringing the hearts of the living, that have as much ſenſe as one's ſelf, is what I call cruel; and is not this what attorney Caſe has

been doing by poor Suſan, and her whole family, ever ſince he took a ſpite againſt them? But, at any rate, here's Suſan's lamb ſafe and ſound; I'd have taken it back ſooner, but I was off before day to the fair, and am but juſt come back; however, Daiſy has been as well off in my paddock, as he would have been in the field by the water-ſide."

The obliging ſhopkeeper, who ſhewed the pretty callicoes to Suſan, was now at his door, and when he ſaw the lamb, heard that it was Suſan's, and learnt it's hiſtory, he ſaid that he would add his mite, and he gave the children ſome ends of narrow riband, with which Roſe decorated her friend's lamb.

The pipe and tabor now once more began to play, and the proceſſion moved on in joyful order, after giving the

humane butcher three cheers.—Three cheers which were better deſerved, than "loud huzzas" uſually are.

Suſan was working in her arbour, with her little deal table before her; when ſhe heard the ſound of the muſic, ſhe put down her work and liſtened; ſhe ſaw the crowd of children coming nearer and nearer, they had cloſed round Daiſy, ſo that ſhe did not ſee it, but as they came up to the garden-gate ſhe ſaw Roſe beckon to her.—Philip played as loud as he could, that ſhe might not hear, till the proper moment, the bleating of the lamb.

Suſan opened the garden-wicket, and at this ſignal the crowd divided, and the firſt thing that Suſan ſaw in the midſt of her taller friends was little ſmiling Mary, with the Guinea hen in her arms.

"Come on! Come on!" cried Mary, as Suſan ſtarted with joyful ſurprize; "you have more to ſee."

At this inſtant the muſic pauſed; Suſan heard the bleating of a lamb, and ſcarcely daring to believe her ſenſes, ſhe preſſed eagerly forward, and beheld poor Daiſy!—ſhe burſt into tears.

"I did not ſhed one tear when I parted with you, my dear little Daiſy!" ſaid ſhe; "it was for my father and mother; I would not have parted with you for any thing elſe in the whole world.—Thank you, thank you all," added ſhe to her companions, who ſympathized in her joy, even more than they had ſympathized in her ſorrow.—"Now if my father was not to go away from us next week, and if my mother was quite ſtout, I ſhould be the happieſt perſon in the world!"

As Suſan pronounced theſe words, a voice behind the little liſtening crowd cried, in a brutal tone, "Let us paſs, "if you pleaſe, you have no right to "ſtop up the public road!" This was the voice of attorney Caſe, who was returning with his daughter Barbara from his viſit at the Abbey.—He ſaw the lamb, and tried to whiſtle as he paſſed on; Barbara alſo ſaw the Guinea hen, and turned her head another way, that ſhe might avoid the contemptuous reproachful looks of thoſe, whom ſhe only affected to deſpiſe. Even her new bonnet, in which ſhe had expected to be ſo much admired, was now only ſerviceable to hide her face, and conceal her mortification.

"I am glad ſhe ſaw the Guinea hen," cried Roſe, who now held it in her hands.

"Yes," ſaid Philip, "ſhe'll not forget May-day in a hurry."

"Nor I neither, I hope," ſaid Suſan, looking round upon her companions with a moſt affectionate ſmile, "I hope, whilſt I live, I ſhall never forget your goodneſs to me laſt May-day. Now I've my pretty Guinea hen ſafe once more, I ſhould think of returning your money."

"No! no! no!" was the general cry. "We don't want the money—keep it, keep it—you want it for your father."

"Well," ſaid Suſan, "I am not too proud to be obliged. I *will* keep your money for my father. Perhaps ſome time or other I may be able to earn—"

"Oh," interrupted Philip, "don't let us talk of earning, don't let us talk to her of money now; ſhe has not had time

hardly to look at poor Daiſy and her Guinea hen.—Come, we had beſt go about our buſineſs, and let her have them all to herſelf."

The crowd moved away in conſequence of Philip's conſiderate advice; but it was obſerved, that he was the very laſt to ſtir from the garden-wicket himſelf. He ſtayed, firſt, to inform Suſan, that it was Roſe who tied the ribbons on Daiſy's head; then he ſtayed a little longer to let her into the hiſtory of the Guinea hen, and to tell her who it was, that brought the hen home from the Abbey.

Roſe held the ſieve, and Suſan was feeding her long-loſt favourite, whilſt Philip leaned over the wicket prolonging his narration.

" Now, my pretty Guinea hen, my naughty Guinea hen, that flew away

from me, you ſhall never ſerve me ſo again—I muſt cut your nice wings, but I won't hurt you."

"Take care," cried Philip, "you'd better, indeed you'd better let me hold her, whilſt you cut her wings."

When this operation was ſucceſsfully performed, which it certainly could never have been, if Philip had not held the hen for Suſan, he recollected, that his mother had ſent him with a meſſage to Mrs. Price.

This meſſage led to another quarter of an hour's delay, for he had the whole hiſtory of the Guinea hen to tell over again to Mrs. Price, and the farmer himſelf luckily came in whilſt it was going on, ſo it was but civil to begin it afreſh, and then the farmer was ſo rejoiced to ſee his Suſan ſo happy again with her two little favourites, that he declared

he muſt ſee Daiſy fed himſelf, and Philip found that he was wanted to hold the jug full of milk, out of which farmer Price filled the pan for Daiſy! happy Daiſy! who lapped at his eaſe, whilſt Suſan careſſed him, and thanked her fond father and her pleaſed mother.

"But, Philip," ſaid Mrs. Price, "I'll hold the jug—you'll be late with your meſſage to your mother; we'll not detain you any longer."

Philip departed, and as he went out of the garden-wicket he looked up, and ſaw Bab and her maid Betty ſtaring out of the window, as uſual; on this he immediately turned back, to try whether he had ſhut the gate faſt, leſt the Guinea hen might ſtray out, and fall again into the hands of the enemy.

Miſs Barbara, in the courſe of this day, had felt conſiderable mortification,

but no contrition. She was vexed that her meanneſs was diſcovered, but ſhe felt no deſire to cure herſelf of any of her faults. The ball was ſtill uppermoſt in her vain ſelfiſh ſoul.

"Well," ſaid ſhe, to her confidante Betty, "you hear how things have turned out; but if Miſs Somers won't think of aſking me to go with her, I've a notion I know who will.—As papa ſays, it's a good thing to have two ſtrings to one's bow."

Now, ſome officers, who were quartered at Shrewſbury, had become acquainted with Mr. Caſe; they had gotten into ſome quarrel with a tradeſman in the town, and attorney Caſe had promiſed to bring them through the affair, as the man threatened to take the law of them. Upon the faith of this promiſe, and with the vain hope, that

by civility they might diſpoſe him to bring in a *reaſonable* bill of coſts, theſe officers ſometimes invited Mr. Caſe to the meſs, and one of them, who had lately been married, prevailed upon his bride *ſometimes* to take a little notice of Miſs Barbara. It was with this lady, that Miſs Barbara now hoped to go to the harpers' ball.

"The officers and Mrs. Strathſpey, or more properly Mrs. Strathſpey and the officers are to breakfaſt here to-morrow, do you know," ſaid Bab to Betty.—"One of them dined at the Abbey to-day, and told papa, they'd all come; they are going out, on a party, ſomewhere into the country, and breakfaſt here in their way.—Pray, Betty, don't forget, that Mrs. Strathſpey can't breakfaſt without honey, I heard her ſay ſo myſelf."

"Then, indeed," ſaid Betty, "I'm afraid Mrs. Strathſpey will be likely to go without her breakfaſt here, for not a ſpoonful of honey have we, let her long for it ever ſo much."

"But, ſurely," ſaid Bab, "we can contrive to get ſome honey in the neighbourhood."

"There's none to be bought, as I know of," ſaid Betty.

"But is there none to be begged or borrowed," ſaid Bab, laughing; "do you forget Suſan's beehive. Step over to her in the morning, with *my compliments*, and ſee what you can do—tell her it is for Mrs. Strathſpey."

In the morning Betty went with Miſs Barbara's compliments to Suſan, to beg ſome honey for Mrs. Strathſpey, who could not breakfaſt without it.

Suſan did not like to part with her

honey, becauſe her mother loved it, and ſhe therefore gave Betty but a ſmall quantity; when Barbara ſaw how little Suſan ſent, ſhe called her *a miſer*, and ſaid ſhe *muſt* have ſome more for Mrs. Strathſpey.

"I'll go myſelf and ſpeak to her; come you with me, Betty," ſaid the young lady, who found it at preſent convenient to forget her having declared, the day that ſhe ſucked up the broth, that ſhe never would honour Suſan with another viſit.

"Suſan," ſaid ſhe, accoſting the poor girl, whom ſhe had done every thing in her power to injure, "I muſt beg a little more honey from you for Mrs. Strathſpey's breakfaſt. You know, on a particular occaſion, ſuch as this, neighbours muſt help one another."

"To be ſure they ſhould," added Betty.

Suſan, though ſhe was generous, was not weak; ſhe was willing to give to thoſe ſhe loved, but not diſpoſed to let any thing be taken from her, or coaxed out of her, by thoſe ſhe had reaſon to deſpiſe. She civilly anſwered, that ſhe was ſorry ſhe had no more honey to ſpare." Barbara grew angry, and loſt all command of herſelf, when ſhe ſaw that Suſan, without regarding her reproaches, went on looking through the glaſs pane in the beehive.—"I'll tell you what, Suſan Price," ſaid ſhe, in a high tone, "the honey I *will* have, ſo you may as well give it me by fair means—Yes or no?—Speak! will you give it me or not; will you give me that piece of the honey-comb that lies there?"

"That bit of honey-comb is for my mother's breakfaſt," ſaid Suſan, "I cannot give it you."

"Can't you?" ſaid Bab; "then ſee if I don't get it."

She ſtretched acroſs Suſan for the honey-comb, which was lying by ſome roſemary-leaves, that Suſan had freſhly gathered for her mother's tea. Bab graſped, but at her firſt effort ſhe reached only the roſemary; ſhe made a ſecond dart at the honey-comb, and in her ſtruggle to obtain it, ſhe overſet the beehive. The bees ſwarmed about her—her maid Betty ſcreamed, and ran away. Suſan, who was ſheltered by a laburnum-tree, called to Barbara, upon whom the black cluſters of bees were now ſettling, and begged her to ſtand ſtill, and not to beat them away. "If you ſtand quietly, you won't be ſtung, perhaps." But inſtead of ſtanding quietly, Bab buffetted, and ſtamped, and roared, and the bees ſtung her ter-

ribly; her arms and her face ſwelled in a frightful manner. She was helped home by poor Suſan, and treacherous Mrs. Betty, who, now the miſchief was done, thought only of exculpating herſelf to her maſter.

"Indeed, Miſs Barbara," ſaid ſhe, "this was quite wrong of you, to go and get yourſelf into ſuch a ſcrape. I ſhall be turned away for it, you'll ſee."

"I don't care whether you are turned away or not," ſaid Barbara, "I never felt ſuch pain in my life. Can't you do ſomething for me. I don't mind the pain either ſo much as being ſuch a fright. Pray, how am I to be fit to be ſeen at breakfaſt by Mrs. Strathſpey; and I ſuppoſe I can't go to the ball either, to-morrow, after all!"

"No, that you can't expect to do, indeed," ſaid Betty the comforter. "You

need not think of balls, for thoſe lumps and ſwellings won't go off your face this week.—That's not what pains me, but I'm thinking of what your papa will ſay to me, when he ſees you, Miſs."

Whilſt this amiable miſtreſs and maid were in their adverſity, reviling one another, Suſan, when ſhe ſaw that ſhe could be of no farther uſe, was preparing to depart; but at the houſe-door ſhe was met by Mr. Caſe.

Mr. Caſe had revolved things in his mind, for his ſecond viſit at the Abbey pleaſed him as little as his firſt, from a few words Sir Arthur and Miſs Somers dropped in ſpeaking of Suſan and farmer Price. Mr. Caſe began to fear, that he had miſtaken his game in quarrelling with this family. The refuſal of his preſent dwelt upon the attorney's mind, and he was aware, that if the hiſtory of

Suſan's lamb ever reached the Abbey, he was undone; he now thought, that the moſt prudent courſe he could poſſibly follow would be, to *huſh up* matters with the *Prices* with all convenient ſpeed. Conſequently, when he met Suſan at his door, he forced a gracious ſmile.

"How is your mother, Suſan?" ſaid he. "Is there any thing in our houſe can be of ſervice to her? I'm glad to ſee you here. Barbara! Barbara! Bab!" cried he; "come down ſtairs, child, and ſpeak to Suſan Price." And, as no Barbara anſwered, her father ſtalked up ſtairs directly, opened her door, and ſtood amazed at the ſpectacle of her ſwelled viſage.

Betty inſtantly began to tell the ſtory her own way. Bab contradicted her as faſt as ſhe ſpoke. The attorney turned the maid away upon the ſpot;

and partly with real anger, and partly with politic affectation of anger, he demanded from his daughter, how ſhe dared to treat Suſan Price ſo ill, "when ſhe was ſo neighbourly and obliging as to give you ſome of her honey, couldn't you be content without ſeizing upon the honey-comb by force. This is ſcandalous behaviour, and what, I aſſure you, I can't countenance."

Suſan now interceded for Barbara; and the attorney, ſoftening his voice, ſaid that Suſan was a great deal too good to her, as indeed you are, Suſan," added he, "to every body. I forgive her for your ſake."

Suſan courteſied, in great ſurpriſe, but her lamb could not be forgotten, and ſhe left the attorney's houſe as ſoon as ſhe could, to make her mother's roſemary-tea for breakfaſt.

Mr. Caſe ſaw, that Suſan was not ſo ſimple as to be taken in by a few fair words. His next attempt was to conciliate farmer Price; the farmer was a blunt honeſt man, and his countenance remained inflexibly contemptuous, when the attorney addreſſed him in his ſofteſt tone.

So ſtood matters the day of the long-expected harpers' ball.—Miſs Barbara Caſe, ſtung by Suſan's bees, could not, after all her manœuvres, go with Mrs. Strathſpey to the ball.

The ball-room was filled early in the evening; there was a numerous aſſembly; the harpers, who contended for the prize, were placed under the muſic-gallery at the lower end of the room; amongſt them was our old blind friend, who, as he was not ſo well clad as his competitors, ſeemed to be diſdained by

many of the ſpectators.—Six ladies and ſix gentlemen were now appointed, to be judges of the performance. They were ſeated in a ſemi-circle, oppoſite to the harpers. The Miſs Somerſes, who were fond of muſic, were amongſt the ladies in the ſemi-circle, and the prize was lodged in the hands of Sir Arthur. There was now ſilence. The firſt harp ſounded, and as each muſician tried his ſkill, the audience ſeemed to think, that each deſerved the prize. The old blind man was the laſt; he tuned his inſtrument, and ſuch a ſimple pathetic ſtrain was heard as touched every heart. All were fixed in delighted attention, and when the muſic ceaſed, the ſilence for ſome moments continued.—The ſilence was followed by an univerſal buz of applauſe. The judges were unanimous in their opinions, and it was

declared, that the old blind harper, who played the laſt, deſerved the prize.

The ſimple, pathetic air, which won the ſuffrages of the whole aſſembly, was his own compoſition; he was preſſed to give the words belonging to the muſic, and at laſt he modeſtly offered to repeat them, as he could not ſee to write. Miſs Somers's ready pencil was inſtantly produced, and the old harper dictated the words of his ballad, which he called—"*Suſan's Lamentation for her Lamb.*"

Miſs Somers looked at her brother from time to time, as ſhe wrote, and Sir Arthur, as ſoon as the old man had finiſhed, took him aſide, and aſked him ſome queſtions, which brought the whole hiſtory of Suſan's lamb, and of attorney Caſe's cruelty, to light.

The attorney himſelf was preſent,

when the harper began to dictate his ballad; his colour, as Sir Arthur ſteadily looked at him, varied continually; till at length, when he heard the words, "Suſan's lamentation for her lamb," he ſuddenly ſhrunk back, ſkulked through the crowd, and diſappeared.—We ſhall not follow him, we had rather follow our old friend, the victorious harper.

No ſooner had he received the ten guineas, his well-merited prize, than he retired into a ſmall room belonging to the people of the houſe, aſked for pen, ink, and paper, and dictated, in a low voice, to his boy, who was a tolerably good ſcribe, a letter, which he ordered him to put directly into the Shrewſbury poſt-office; the boy ran with the letter to the poſt-office; he was but juſt in time, for the poſtman's horn was ſounding.

The next morning, when farmer Price, his wife, and Suſan, were ſitting together, reflecting that his week's leave of abſence was nearly at an end, and that the money was not yet made up for John Simſon, the ſubſtitute, a knock was heard at the door, and the perſon, who uſually delivered the letters in the village, put a letter into Suſan's hand, ſaying, "a penny, if you pleaſe—here's a letter for your father."

"For me!" ſaid farmer Price, "here's the penny then; but who can it be from, I wonder; who can think of writing to me, in this world?" He tore open the letter, but the hard name at the bottom of the page puzzled him—"*your obliged friend*—Llewellyn." "And what's this," ſaid he, opening a paper that was encloſed in the letter, "it's a ſong, ſeemingly; it muſt be

ſomebody that has a mind to make an April fool of me."

"But it is not April, it is May, father," ſaid Suſan.

"Well, let us read the letter, and we ſhall come at the truth—all in good time."

Farmer Price ſat down in his own chair, for he could not read entirely to his ſatisfaction in any other, and read as follows:

"My worthy friend,

"I am ſure you will be glad to hear, that I have had good ſucceſs this night. I have won the ten guinea prize, and for that I am in a great meaſure indebted to your ſweet daughter Suſan, as you will ſee by a little ballad I encloſe for her.—Your hoſpitality to me has afforded me an opportunity of learning ſome of your family hiſtory. You do

not, I hope, forget that I was preſent, when you were counting the treaſure in Suſan's little purſe, and that I heard for what purpoſe it was all deſtined.—You have not, I know, yet made up the full ſum for your ſubſtitute, John Simſon, therefore do me the favour to uſe the five-guinea bank-note, which you will find within the ballad. You ſhall not find me as hard a creditor as attorney Caſe. Pay me the money at your own convenience; if it is never convenient to you to pay it, I ſhall never aſk it. I ſhall go my rounds again through this country, I believe, about this time next year, and will call to ſee how you do, and to play the new tune for Suſan and the dear little boys.

"I ſhould juſt add, to ſet your heart at reſt about the money, that it does not diſtreſs me at all to lend it to you;

I am not quite ſo poor as I appear to be; but it is my humour to go about as I do, I ſee more of the world under my tattered garb than, perhaps, I ſhould ever ſee in a better dreſs. There are many of my profeſſion, who are of the ſame mind as myſelf, in this reſpect, and we are glad, when it lies in our way, to do any kindneſs to ſuch a worthy family as your's.—So fare ye well,

Your obliged friend,

LLEWELLYN."

Suſan now, by her father's deſire, opened the ballad, he picked up the five-guinea bank-note, whilſt ſhe read with ſurprize, "Suſan's lamentation for her lamb." Her mother leaned over her ſhoulder to read the words, but they were interrupted, before they had finiſhed the firſt ſtanza, by another knock at the door. It was not the poſtman

with another letter, it was Sir Arthur and his ſiſters.

They came with an intention, which they were much diſappointed to find, that the old harper had rendered vain—they came to lend the farmer and his good family the money, to pay for his ſubſtitute.

"But, ſince we are here," ſaid Sir Arthur, "let me do my own buſineſs, which I had like to have forgotten. Mr. Price, will you come out with me, and let me ſhew you a piece of your land, through which I want to make a road. Look there," ſaid Sir Arthur, pointing to the ſpot, "I am laying out a ride round my eſtate, and that bit of land of your's ſtops me."

"Why ſo, Sir," ſaid Price, "the land's mine, to be ſure, for that matter; but I hope you don't look upon me to

be that ſort of perſon, that would be ſtiff about a trifle, or ſo."

"Why," ſaid Sir Arthur, "I had heard you were a litigious, pig-headed fellow; but you do not ſeem to deſerve this character."

"Hope not, Sir," ſaid the farmer; "but about the matter of the land, I don't want to make no advantage of your wiſhing for it, you are welcome to it, and I leave it to you to find me out another bit of land convenient to me, that will be worth neither more nor leſs, or elſe to make up the value to me ſome way or other. I need ſay no more about it."

"I hear ſomething," continued Sir Arthur, after a ſhort ſilence, "I hear ſomething, Mr. Price, of *a flaw* in your leaſe. I would not ſpeak to you of it whilſt we were bargaining about

your land, leſt I ſhould over-awe you; but tell me what is this *flaw?*"

"In truth, and the truth is the fitteſt thing to be ſpoken at all times," ſaid the farmer, "I didn't know myſelf what *a flaw*, as they call it, meant, till I heard of the word from attorney Caſe; and I take it, *a flaw* is neither more nor leſs than a miſtake, as one ſhould ſay; now, by reaſon, a man does not make a miſtake on purpoſe; it ſeems to me to be the fair thing, that if a man finds out his miſtake, he might ſet it right; but attorney Caſe ſays, this is not law, and I've no more to ſay. The man who drew up my leaſe made a miſtake, and if I muſt ſuffer for it I muſt," ſaid the farmer. "However I can ſhew you, Sir Arthur, juſt for my own ſatisfaction and your's, a few lines of a memorandum on a ſlip of paper, which

was given me by your relation, the gentleman who lived here before, and let me my farm. You'll ſee, by that bit of paper, what was meant; but the attorney ſays, the paper's not worth a button in a court of juſtice, and I don't underſtand theſe things. All I underſtand is the common honeſty of the matter. I've no more to ſay."

"This attorney, whom you ſpeak of ſo often," ſaid Sir Arthur, "you ſeem to have ſome quarrel with him. Now, would you tell me frankly, what is the matter between——"

"The matter between us then," ſaid Price, "is a little bit of ground, not worth much, that there is open to the lane at the end of Mr. Caſe's garden, Sir, and he wanted to take it in. Now, I told him my mind, that it belonged to the pariſh, and that I never would wil-

lingly give my conſent to his cribbing it in that way. Sir, I was the more loth to ſee it ſhut into his garden, which moreover is large enow of all conſcience without it, becauſe you muſt know, Sir Arthur, the children in our village are fond of making a little play-green of it, and they have a cuſtom of meeting on May-day at a hawthorn that ſtands in the middle of it, and altogether I was very loth to ſee 'em turned out of it by thoſe who had no right."

"Let us go and ſee this nook," ſaid Sir Arthur; "it is not far off, is it?"

"Oh no, Sir, juſt hard by here."

When they got to the ground, Mr. Caſe, who ſaw them walking together, was in a hurry to join them, that he might put a ſtop to any explanations. Explanations were things of which he had a great dread, but fortunately

he was upon this occaſion a little too late.

"Is this the nook in diſpute," ſaid Sir Arthur.

"Yes; this is the whole thing," ſaid Price.

"Why, Sir Arthur, don't let us talk any more about it," ſaid the politic attorney, with an aſſumed air of generoſity, "let it belong to whom it will, I give it up to you."

"So great a lawyer, Mr. Caſe, as you are," replied Sir Arthur, "muſt know, that a man cannot give up that to which he has no legal title; and in this caſe, it is impoſſible that, with the beſt intentions to oblige me in the world, you can give up this bit of land to me, becauſe it is mine already, as I can convince you effectually, by a map of the adjoining land, which I have for-

tunately ſafe amongſt my papers. This piece of ground belonged to the farm on the oppoſite ſide of the road, and it was cut off when the lane was made."

"Very poſſibly, I dare ſay you are quite correct, you muſt know beſt," ſaid the attorney, trembling for the agency.

"Then," ſaid Sir Arthur, "Mr. Price, you will obſerve, that I now promiſe this little green to the children, for a play-ground, and I hope they may gather hawthorn many a May-day at this their favourite buſh."

Mr. Price bowed low, which he ſeldom did, even when he received a favour himſelf.

"And now, Mr. Caſe," ſaid Sir Arthur, turning to the Attorney, who did not know which way to look, "you ſent me a leaſe to look over."

"Ye—ye—yes," ſtammered Mr. Caſe. "I thought it my duty to do ſo, not out of any malice or ill-will to this good man."

"You have done him no injury," ſaid Sir Arthur, coolly.—"I am ready to make him a new leaſe, whenever he pleaſes, of his farm, and I ſhall be guided by a memorandum of the original bargain, which he has in his poſſeſſion. I hope I never ſhall take an unfair advantage of any one."

"Heaven forbid, Sir," ſaid the attorney, ſanctifying his face, "that I ſhould ſuggeſt the taking an *unfair* advantage of any man, rich or poor—but to break a bad leaſe, is not taking an unfair advantage."

"You really think ſo?" ſaid Sir Arthur.

"Certainly I do, and I hope I have

not hazarded your good opinion, by ſpeaking my mind concerning the flaw, ſo plainly. I always underſtood, that there could be nothing ungentlemanlike, in the way of buſineſs, in taking advantage of a flaw in a leaſe."

"Now," ſaid Sir Arthur, "you have pronounced judgment, *undeſignedly*, in your own caſe.—You intended to ſend me this poor man's leaſe, but your ſon, by ſome miſtake, brought me your own, and I have diſcovered a fatal error in it."

"A fatal error!" ſaid the alarmed attorney.

"Yes, Sir," ſaid Sir Arthur, pulling the leaſe out of his pocket; "here it is—you will obſerve, that it is neither ſigned nor ſealed by the grantor."

"But you won't take advantage of me ſurely, Sir Arthur," ſaid Mr. Caſe, forgetting his own principles.

"I ſhall not take advantage of you, as you would have taken of this honeſt man. In both caſes I ſhall be guided by memorandums which I have in my poſſeſſion. I ſhall not, Mr. Caſe, defraud you of one ſhilling of your property. I am ready, at a fair valuation, to pay the exact value of your houſe and land, but, upon this condition, that you quit the pariſh within one month."

Attorney Caſe ſubmitted, for he knew that he could not legally reſiſt.—He was glad to be let off ſo eaſily, and he bowed, and ſneaked away, ſecretly comforting himſelf with the hope, that when they came to the valuation of the houſe and land, he ſhould be the gainer, perhaps, of a few guineas; his reputation he juſtly held very cheap.

"You are a ſcholar, you write a good

hand, you can keep accounts, cannot you?" ſaid Sir Arthur to Mr. Price, as they walked home towards his cottage. "I think I ſaw a bill of your little daughter's drawing-out the other day, which was very neatly written? Did you teach her to write?"

"No, Sir," ſaid Price, "I can't ſay I did *that*, for ſhe moſtly taught it herſelf, but I taught her a little arithmetic, as far as I knew, on our winter nights, when I had nothing better to do."

"Your daughter ſhews that ſhe has been well taught," ſaid Sir Arthur, "and her good conduct and good character ſpeak ſtrongly in favour of her parents."

"You are very good, very good indeed, Sir, to ſpeak in this ſort of way," ſaid the delighted father

"But I mean to do more than *pay you with words*," ſaid Sir Arthur. "You are attached to your own family, perhaps you may become attached to me, when you come to know me, and we ſhall have frequent opportunities of judging of one another. I want no agent to ſqueeze my tenants, or to do my dirty work. I only want a ſteady, intelligent, honeſt man, like you, to collect my rents, and I hope, Mr. Price, you will have no objection to the employment."

"I hope, Sir," ſaid Price, with joy and gratitude glowing in his honeſt countenance, "that you'll never have no cauſe to repent your goodneſs."

"And what are my ſiſters about here?" ſaid Sir Arthur, entering the cottage, and going behind his ſiſters,

who were buſily engaged in meaſuring an extremely pretty coloured callico.

"It is for Suſan! my dear brother," ſaid they.

"I knew ſhe did not keep that guinea for herſelf," ſaid Miſs Somers; "I have juſt prevailed upon her mother, to tell me what became of it. Suſan gave it to her father—but ſhe muſt not refuſe a gown of our chooſing this time, and I am ſure ſhe will not, becauſe her mother, I ſee, likes it.—And Suſan, I hear, that, inſtead of being Queen of the May this year, you were ſitting in your ſick mother's room. Your mother has a little colour in her cheeks now."

"Oh, ma'am," interrupted Mrs. Price, "I'm quite well—joy, I think, has made me quite well."

"Then," ſaid Miſs Somers, "I hope you will be able to come out on your daughter's birth-day, which I hear is the 25th of this month.—Make haſte and get quite well before that day, for my brother intends, that all the lads and laſſes of the village ſhall have a dance on Suſan's birth-day."

"Yes," ſaid Sir Arthur, "and I hope, on that day, Suſan, you will be very happy with your little friends upon their play-green. I ſhall tell them, that it is your good conduct, which has obtained it for them; and if you have any thing to aſk, any little favour for any of your companions, which we can grant, now aſk, Suſan; theſe ladies look as if they would not refuſe you any thing that is reaſonable; and I think

you look as if you would not aſk any thing unreaſonable."

"Sir," ſaid Suſan, after conſulting her mother's eyes, "there is, to be ſure, a favour I ſhould like to aſk, it is for Roſe."

"Well, I don't know who Roſe is," ſaid Sir Arthur, ſmiling; "but go on."

"Ma'am, you have ſeen her, I believe; ſhe is a very good girl indeed," ſaid Mrs. Price.

"And works very neatly indeed," continued Suſan, eagerly, to Miſs Somers, "and ſhe and her mother heard you were looking out for one to wait upon you."

"Say no more," ſaid Miſs Somers, "your wiſh is granted; tell Roſe to come to the Abbey to-morrow morning,

or rather come with her yourſelf, for our houſekeeper, I know, wants to talk to you, about a certain cake. She wiſhes, Suſan, that you ſhould be the maker of the cake for the dance, and ſhe has good things ready looked out for it already, I know. It muſt be large enough for every body to have a ſlice, and the houſekeeper will ice it for you. I only hope your cake will be as good as your bread.—Fare ye well."

How happy are thoſe who bid farewel to a whole family, ſilent with gratitude, who will bleſs them aloud when they are far out of hearing!'

"How do I wiſh, now," ſaid farmer Price, "and it's almoſt a ſin for one, that has had ſuch a power of favours done him, to wiſh for any thing more; but how I *do* wiſh, wife, that our good

friend the harper, Suſan, was only here at this time, being it would do his old warm heart good. Well, the beſt of it is, we ſhall be able, next year, when he comes his rounds, to pay him his money with thanks, being all the time, and for ever, as much obliged to him as if we kept it, and wanted it as badly as we did, when he gave it ſo handſome.—I long, ſo I do, to ſee him in this houſe again, drinking, as he did, juſt in this ſpot, a glaſs of Suſan's mead, to her very good health."

"Yes," ſaid Suſan, "and the next time he comes, I can give him one of my Guinea hen's eggs, and I ſhall ſhew my lamb Daiſy."

"True, love," ſaid her mother, "and he will play that tune, and ſing

that pretty ballad—where is it, for I have not finiſhed it."

"Roſe ran away with it, mother; and I'll ſtep after her, and bring it back to you this minute," ſaid Suſan.

Suſan found her friend Roſe at the hawthorn, in the midſt of a crowded circle of her companions, to whom ſhe was reading "Suſan's lamentation for her lamb."

The words are ſomething—but the tune—the tune—I muſt have the tune," cried Philip. "I'll aſk my mother, to aſk Sir Arthur, to try and rout out which way that good old man went after the ball; and if he's above ground we'll have him back by Suſan's birth-day, and he ſhall ſit here, juſt exactly here, by this our buſh, and he ſhall

play—I mean if he pleaſes—that there tune for us, and I ſhall learn it—I mean if I can—in a minute."

The good news, that farmer Price was to be employed to collect the rents, and that attorney Caſe was to leave the pariſh in a month, ſoon ſpread over the village. Many came out of their houſes to have the pleaſure of hearing the joyful tidings confirmed by Suſan herſelf; the crowd on the play-green increaſed every minute.

"Yes," cried the triumphant Philip, "I tell you it's all true, every word of it. Suſan's too modeſt to ſay it herſelf—but I tell ye all, Sir Arthur gave us this play-green for ever, on account of her being ſo good."

You ſee, at laſt, attorney Caſe, with all his cunning, has not proved a match for "Simple Suſan."

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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